THE FOURTH EDITION,

WITH CONSIDERABLE ADDITIONS AND THE MAJOR'S PORTRAIT,

Etched from an original Drawing, taken on Saturday, Sept. 2, 1786, when he was upon his Trial at the OLD BAILEY.

Memoirs of Major Semple,

The NORTHERN IMPOSTOR.

(Price ONE SHILLING.)

ENTERED AT STATIONERS HALL.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The artifices of that arch ſwindler, Major Semple, induced various perſons who have been plundered by him to contribute, without the leaſt view to profit, (as appears by the bulk of the work, which is equal in quantity to a half-crown pamphlet) to print an account of the different modes by which he accompliſhed his fraudulent views; and they employed Mr. Kearſley in Fleet-ſtreet, as their publiſher.

About two days after its appearance, another compilation was alſo advertiſed; and, in order to deceive, part of Kearſley's title was taken, viz. "*The Northern Hero.*"

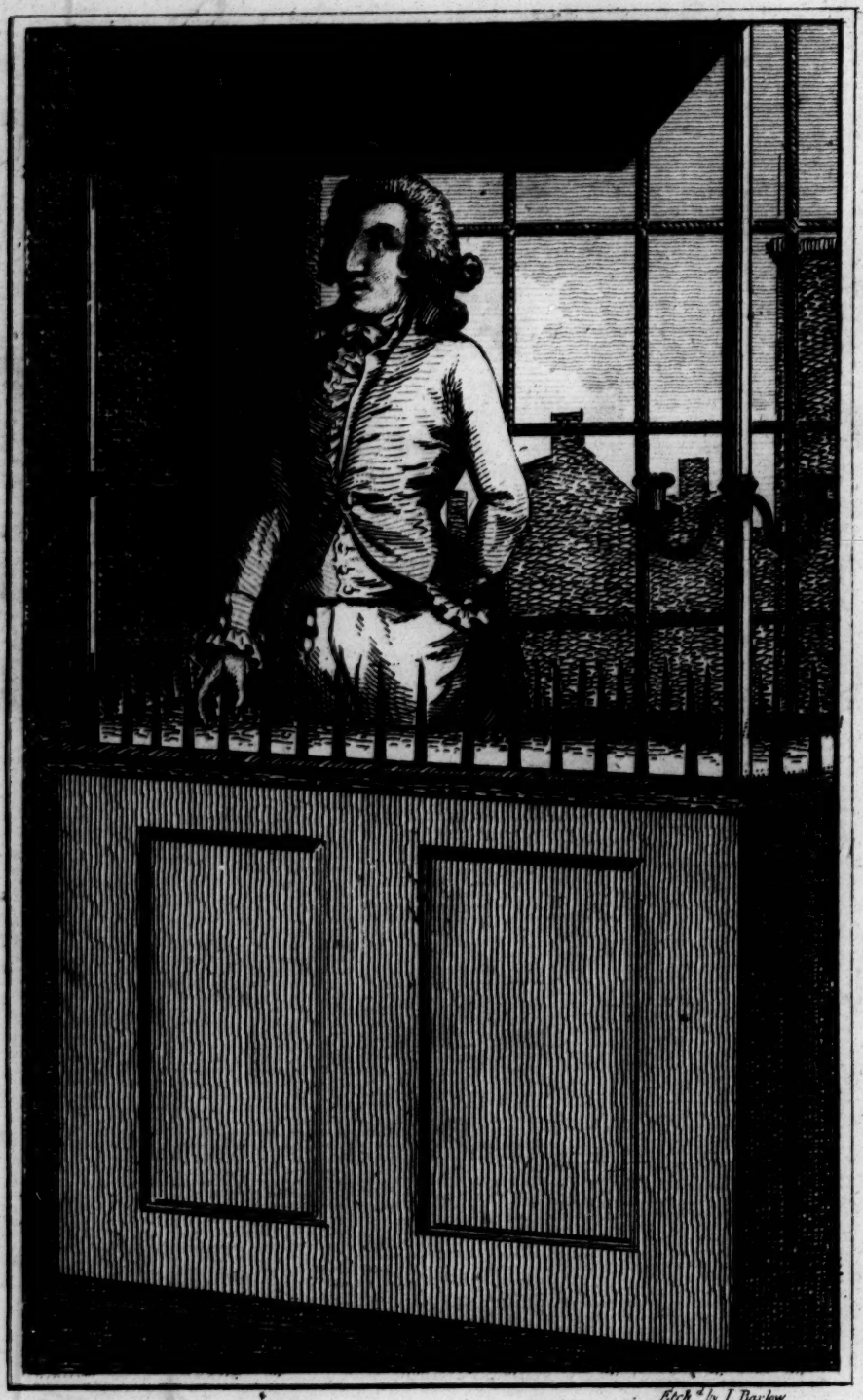
However, upon inſpection, it turns out a work of imagination; a mere romance, barren of any facts, except a few that appeared in the public prints, relative to Semple's commitment.

The public being informed of this impoſition, it can ſcarcely be neceſſary to point out the propriety of examining the title: ſuch copies as have not Kearſley's name at the bottom of the title are of the above ſpurious edition.

*** At the requeſt of ſeveral gentlemen who favoured us with the following anecdotes, we have, in this edition, in order to prevent all poſſibility of deception, changed the original title of The NORTHERN HERO, to that of The NORTHERN IMPOSTOR.

BRITISH MUSEUM
1891
30
OCT

JAMES GEORGE SEMPLE.



Etch.d by J. Barlow.

Published as the Act directs for G. Kearsley at N.o 46 in Fleet Street, Septem.r 2.d 1786.

THE FOURTH EDITION.

With conſiderable additions, particularly facts lately authenticated from RUSSIA, *containing an account of his artifices in that part of the world.*

THE

NORTHERN IMPOSTOR;

Being a faithful Narrative of the ADVENTURES, and DECEPTIONS, of JAMES GEORGE SEMPLE, commonly called

MAJOR SEMPLE,

alias Major HARROLD, Major MAXWELL, Major GRANT, Major CUNNINGHAM, Major WINTER, &c. &c. &c.

With an Account of his Devices at Lord SALISBURY's, Sir THOMAS DUNDASS's, Mr. PITT's, the MARQUIS of LANSDOWN's, Baron HOMPESCH, Dr. PRETTYMAN, &c. &c.

Alſo the various Inventions by which he obtained Goods of different Tradeſmen; and the Names of the Perſons who were the Objects of his Depredations.

LIKEWISE

An ACCOUNT of his TRIAL,

Before Mr. Juſtice GOULD and the RECORDER,

At the OLD BAILEY, for defrauding Mr. JOHN LYCETT of a POST-CHAISE, value FIFTY GUINEAS, of which he was convicted. Likewiſe Mr. GARROW's Motion on the laſt Day of the Seſſions, for deferring JUDGMENT.

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TO

JAMES ADAIR, ESQUIRE,

SERJEANT AT LAW,

AND

RECORDER OF THE CITY OF LONDON.

SIR,

THE following pages are dedicated to you, as the humble mite of an individual, who has long been an obſerver of your conduct in the high ſtation to which your private virtues and public merit have ſo juſtly raiſed you.

Your great concern for, and circumſpection in, the ſecurity of property, and the freedom of the ſubject, have gained you a name which will live as long as the Whig intereſt of this country ſhall exiſt.

I am,

SIR,

With the moſt profound reſpect,

Your obedient humble Servant,

The COMPILER.

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MEMOIRS

MEMOIRS, &c.

IT is neither a new nor a ſingular obſervation, that every century hath produced a Genius, and every country an Hero. There is no neceſſity to have recourſe to the annals of the ancients, or to the multiplied inſtances of modern hiſtory to juſtify the aſſertion. France has had her Charlatan, and her Comteſſe de la Motte. Jonathan Wild, and Mrs. Margaretta Matilda Sophia Carolina Rudd, may ſafely diſpute the laurel with the Gallic Hero and Heroine: but Britain, the queen of iſles, ſeems to be the natural ſoil for the cultivation of ſuch genius and heroiſm.

A few years, however, have determined to whom the laurel wreath is due. We have had Miniſters of the Church of England executed for forgery and murder, and a Methodiſt Preacher, in holy orders, hanged for raviſhing dozens of young children, to whom he was ſchool-maſter. Lawyers and Contractors have kept perjury in countenance; and the GREAT CHARLES PRICE, juſtly ſtiled *The* SOCIAL MONSTER, ruſhed into

the preſence of his Maker, rather than have his genius recorded in the Ordinary's Calendar of Newgate Heroes.

The progreſs of heroiſm has led us into theſe obſervations. They prove, that a very few years have eclipſed the tranſactions of ages, and that England can boaſt of more renowned exploits in that ſhort period of time, than ever were ſignalized throughout all Europe during the laſt century.

It was the reflection of a great lawyer, that the laws of this country were made to bind a *bold* and *daring* race of people. In his days, the refinements of modern villainy were unknown, and therefore unpractiſed. The name of SWINDLER, a creature begot between Downright Robbery and Dame Forgery, was unheard of.

It is alſo an eſtabliſhed truth, that the powers of legiſlation can never keep pace with inventive knavery, the natural depravity of mankind baffling every attempt to deter it. The efforts of moral writers have been equally ſucceſsleſs to reſtrain the vicious part of it from unprincipled diſhoneſty.—Thus whilſt the abſurdity of our penal ſtatutes have opened doors of invitation to ingenious chicanery, the ſcandalous and contemptible artifices of dirty pettifogging attornies, and Old Bailey bar-orators, have given a looſe and encouragement to every ſpecies of fraud and impoſition.

To

To inſtance this—An act of parliament was made, which decreed it a capital offence to ſteal horſes, mares, or geldings. The firſt man who was ever tried upon that act pleaded the *ſingular* number.——As he had only ſtolen *a horſe*, he was —Acquitted.—It was a penal ſtatute, and not to be *liberally* conſtrued.—The *text* was to be ſtrictly adhered to.

To prevent the receiving of ſtolen goods, knowing them to have been ſtolen, in the enumeration of the articles, watches were omitted. They are held not to come under the deſcription of goods, wares, or merchandize: a receiver of ſtolen goods may therefore purchaſe as many watches as he pleaſes, of whom he pleaſes, and at what price he thinks proper!

In the act againſt dog-ſtealing, the magiſtrate has a power to fine, impriſon, and order the immediate correction of the houſe. After conviction, and when the culprit's back has been flead, he may, by a very wiſe proviſion in that act, appeal to the quarter ſeſſions to reverſe the flogging!

Turnips might have been ſtolen with impunity, for they were omitted in the act that made it felony to ſteal any thing elſe out of gardens, fields, &c. &c. in conſequence of which a new act was made.

It is well known alſo, that a man may ſet fire to his *own* houſe, and not be puniſhable by any ſtatute law.

Theſe prepoſterous abſurdities and ſcandalous technical omiſſions call loudly for the interpoſition and inſpection of the Twelve Judges, whenever a penal ſtatute is framed. The various and curious labyrinths of the laws would then be reduced into a plain and eaſy road, nor would the incorrigible rogue find a *ſtimulus* from their ſubtle and encouraging conſtructions.

The only argument that ever was advanced againſt conſulting the Judges on theſe occaſions is, that they are ſervants and officers of the crown, *durante bene placitur*, and therefore ought never to interfere in framing laws, where the preſervation of his Majeſty's crown and dignity is concerned, as they may be ſuppoſed to be partial to their royal maſter.—To anſwer this flimſy argument is neither our buſineſs or deſign at preſent.

But though theſe legal inaccuracies and curious diſtinctions operate, in one ſenſe, to the great diſadvantage of the community, yet in another, they afford the moſt pleaſing ſatisfaction, by protecting the life, liberty, and property of Engliſhmen. For if laws are ever to be conſtrued otherwiſe than written, a partial and ſevere Judge, or a packed and corrupt Jury, might ſtretch the arm of reſentment, either to ſerve their own private animoſities, or to favour the deſigning views of an arbitrary and profligate adminiſtration.

The

The late Sir John Fielding, whoſe unwearied endeavours to check the progreſs of all ſorts of vice, muſt make his name remembered with high reſpect, diſcovered, in his official capacity, the very great misfortune of what we now complain, —He daily experienced the triumph of villainy eſpecially in that line which is now the ſubject of this performance.—He applied to parliament, and with much difficulty he procured an act for the better prevention of frauds, (the 30th of Geo. II.) commonly called *Fielding's Act*, which ſecures the property of tradeſmen from the pernicious arts of thoſe public robbers, uſually denominated SWINDLERS; for that which was then deemed but a debt, is now determined to be a felony.

To that magiſtrate, therefore, are the public indebted for the detection of that delinquent, whoſe extraordinary feats of ingenuity have ſtruck ſo much alarm and terror throughout the private as well as mercantile line of life.—At the ſame time juſtice obliges us to add, that the exertions of Mr. Feltham, co-operating with the ſpirit of that act, have carried into effect an event that has for many years been moſt devoutly wiſhed.

We muſt obſerve alſo, that although cultivated knavery is generally imputed to the ſouthern inhabitants of this iſland, yet the perfection of the ſcience was reſerved for a native of North Britain.

After

After this exordium we proceed to our ſubject.

James George Semple was born about the year 1750, at Irvine, in the ſhire of Ayr, and is now about thirty-ſix years of age. He is the ſon of a Mr. James Semple, who was once a ſurveyor in the cuſtom houſe at Scotland; who is alſo living, but from ſome occaſion or other, has *reſigned* his place.

We were the more particular in this circumſtance, not only as it ſatisfies our readers of the birth and parentage of our Hero, but alſo, as it leads to a circumſtance that could not poſſibly be omitted, eſpecially in a narrative of ſuch great actions as we mean to tranſmit to poſterity.

In the year 1547, the title of Lord Viſcount Lyſle, of the kingdom of Scotland became *extinct*; The reader may be aſſured it was not *attainted*. There is no record whatever of its diſaffection to government, and therefore may be juſtly ſtiled as loyal a family as any that North Britain can boaſt.

The dormancy of this title has continued two hundred and thirty-nine years. The father of our Hero, James Semple, we hear has lately laid claim to it. We mention this to ſhew that there is ſtrong ſuppoſition of the dregs of very rich blood running in the veins of James George Semple. It alſo not only adds an importance and dignity to his

his character, but intereſts the reader a little more in his fate. To have a Hero the deſcendant of a long line of anceſtry, is one great effort of modern tragedy; but without ſearching the hiſtories of the Greeks and Romans, or rummaging the Ottoman traditions, we have *ipſo facto*, ſuch an intereſting character from the highlands of Scotland. The phœnix of the family of Lyſle.

His education was at the place of his nativity, Irvine; and it would be ſuperfluous to add, that he was ſoon made converſant in Latin and Greek. In thoſe exerciſes he had no competitor; his juvenile abilities ſoon diſtinguiſhed themſelves, and kept his ſchool-fellows at an humble diſtance. We may add too, that as his years increaſed, ſome other eminent proficiencies kept them at a ſtill greater. To be plain, moſt of the parents of the ſcholars of Irvine were under the neceſſity of directing their children not to aſſociate with James George Semple.

As he grew towards manhood, an elegant figure, a perſon exceeding well made, and a genteel deportment gave him a pre-eminency in point of attraction. To theſe ornaments were added, an underſtanding capable of every improvement, and an affability of temper, ſo conſonant to *the things that be*, that he was a moſt engaging companion, wherever he could introduce himſelf.

Theſe

Theſe qualifications, notwithſtanding the others we juſt hinted at, whilſt they procured him the envy and diſlike of the male part of the creation, made him ample amends by the favour and eſteem in which he was held by the females of all ranks, ages and conditions.

One obſervation ariſes here. Theſe tinſel attractions, and theſe flattering partialities of the ladies, are the rocks on which our youth have too frequently ſplit. They are the Scylla and Charibdis of every young man, whoſe knowledge is like a whipt ſyllabub, and whoſe vanity leads him to ſuppoſe himſelf ſomething, when in truth and in fact they reduce him to a mere non-entity. One deformed ſenſible good man, is of more ſervice to ſociety than a thouſand gay ſuperficial flutterers, with fine figures, even tho' they ſhould be vulgarly honeſt. Ex. Gr.

To the partiality of the ſex, we hear Mr. Semple was indebted for his abdication of Irvine; but we wiſh not to wound the vitals of ſuffering credulity in one ſex, by expoſing the iniquitous arts of the other; or to hang up the name of a lady, when we wiſh only to delineate the character of James George Semple. In order to improve his natural advantages, he was ſent, as we are informed, to the college at Edinburgh, and intended for the Kirk, to which profeſſion he was originally bred. He had not, however, been long there, before he gave ample proofs, that the ſtudy of religion

religion was not calculated for a perſon of his lively diſpoſition and gay turn of mind. The ſtudy of phyſic was then propoſed to him, but that ſcience was too abſtruſe and technical to attract his attention. Law ſeemed to be his favorite amuſement at college, and his father, determined to let his ſon take what courſe of ſtudy he pleaſed, agreed he ſhould become a lawyer, no doubt with a view to prevent his becoming a rogue.

This reminds us of a repartee made uſe of by the magiſtrate whoſe name we have already mentioned. A fellow who made it a practice to pay ſixpence for a baſon of ſoup at various coffee- houſes, and ſteal at the ſame time a ſilver table ſpoon, was at laſt detected. Sir John Fielding aſked him what he was? To which the gentleman replied, " I belong to the Law, Sir." " The Law! pſhaw !damme! that's impoſſible," ſaid Sir John, " if you did you would have ſtolen the *baſon* too."

How long he continued his ſtudies there we are not thoroughly acquainted with, but we are informed that it is near nine years ſince his name was firſt enrolled on the liſts in the black book of Bow-ſtreet, under the title CHEVALIERS DES INDUSTRIE. From this account we may draw a tolerable calculation that he had not been a conſiderable time in London, before he recommended himſelf to the notice and attention of the police.

Having thus traced Mr. Semple's nativity and education, we beg leave to ſay a little more reſpecting his firſt introduction into this great metropolis, where abilities like his have a wide field to diſplay themſelves in, and where induſtry never can be in want of a guinea.

The ſituation of Mr. Semple's father had been naturally ſuch, as to bring him to the knowledge of a certain gentleman, who was intimate with a Scotch merchant, who was acquainted with an attorney, or rather writer at Edinburgh, who was the friend of a gentleman who was very well acquainted with one of the lords of Trade, now one of the lords of his Majeſty's Bed-chamber, who was an intimate friend of one of the directors of the Eaſt India Company.

Now it ſo happened, that there was ſuch a good underſtanding between that certain gentleman, that Scotch merchant, and the lawyer, who tranſacted the buſineſs of the ſaid lord, that the writer, upon the firſt application, declared that young Semple *ſhould* have a place in the Eaſt India Company's ſervice abroad.

Upon this abſolute promiſe from ſuch a great man, the elder Semple equipped James George with all proper materials for ſuch a journey to the Eaſt; not forgetting the requiſites neceſſary to convey him to London, where he ſuppoſed he had nothing

nothing to do but to call on the chairman of that company and receive his appointment.

Notwithſtanding, however, that abſolute promiſe, young Semple found ſome little difficulty in obtaining it; and, being a *bon vivant*, he exhauſted his reſources with a facility that ſoon compelled him to have recourſe to the old man for a freſh ſupply, under the pretence of the neceſſary extravagance he was compelled to live at in London.

Having obtained a ſupply, he diſſipated that with as much ſpeed as he had done his former finances; and whilſt his applications at the Eaſt-India Houſe, and attendance there, ſhould have been renewed with hourly vigour, his only ſtudy was to adorn his ſweet perſon, and commence fine gentleman. The lazineſs of his life ſoon led him into company, capable of completing his utmoſt wiſhes, and all ideas of venturing ſo dangerous a voyage and climate were as ſoon exploded.

Gay life and gay company ſpeedily brought on unhappy projects to ſupport it. It was to this inadvertent ſtep in the elder Semple, of intruſting his ſon as his own maſter in a town, where the utmoſt reſolution and fortitude are too often ineffectual ſecurity againſt vice and debauchery, that the younger Semple owes his ruin. It was more highly criminal in him, as he knew the natural bent of his ſon's inclinations. Let us pity,

therefore, whilſt we condemn; though, at the ſame time, the inadvertence of a father is no apology for the immoralities of a ſon.

In the purſuit of his pleaſures, it was a little unfortunate for a family of great character and reſpect in Devonſhire, the G——TS, that he became their acquaintance. To the daughter of it, it was a moſt irreparable misfortune. She was married to him, and it was not long before Mr. Semple gave very convincing proofs how his noble blood inſpired him to maintain, unſullied, the honour and dignity of the houſe of Lyſle.

After he had married into the before-mentioned family, and his way of life had ſo diſguſted the lady's parents, that they never would conſent to ſee him, they offered to ſettle upon her 200l. per ann. if ſhe would quit her huſband. But ſuch is the prevalence of paſſion in the female part of the creation, that they are not only blind to their own intereſts, but to the defects and vices of him, who, unhappily, chances to be the God of their idolatry.

Mrs. Semple then refuſed the offer; but at length, wearied with habitual enormities, ſhe has conſented to remove herſelf entirely out of his reach. Not thinking herſelf ſafe in England, where ſhe could be peſtered with his viſits and applications, ſhe wiſely choſe to retire to a ſpot where the ſingularity of his adventures has foreclo ſed

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all ideas of diſturbance. She is now at Calais; where Mr. Semple, for a long time paſt, has not ventured to make his appearance, and for a reaſon which to him was a very formidable one. He had already experienced the pleaſures of three years impriſonment in Calais gaol; and, not deſirous of reviſiting his old habitation, very wiſely omitted that ſea-port in his latter viſits to the continent.

The univerſity of Oxford alſo has had the honour of Mr. Semple's being a member of their county gaol for debt; where he remained only five days, and was then matriculated.

We have it alſo from good authority, that he frequented every place of faſhionable amuſement, and was received by ſome families of diſtinction as a viſitor, and as a gentleman of birth and character, whoſe father was claiming an extinct title.

Tell me your company and I'll tell you the man, is a very old ſaying. How far it was verified by Mr. Semple, the loweſt capacity can judge. As there was no company in life which he had not entered into, from the plain gentleman up to the repreſentative of Majeſty, ſo had he contracted their principles, he muſt with his qualifications, have been an ornament to ſociety; but as Shakeſpeare ſays, *Tow'ring ambition which over-vaulteth itſelf*, was the ſource of all his misfortunes. He *would* keep great company, which muſt be attended with a great expence; and in order to furniſh himſelf

with

with the means of ſupporting it, he was compelled to have recourſe to great actions.

It was from this connection however, he luckily obtained a recommendation to quit his native country. The Ruſſian ſervice was propoſed and embraced. The G——t family knew how very fortunate it might turn out for them, and they were happy to hit on any expedient which promiſed a reſtoration of their former felicity. Mr. Semple, therefore, departed for the dominions of the Empreſs, equipped with thoſe requiſites, which were accepted with as much ſatisfaction on one ſide, as they were beſtowed with good will on the other.

Though it will be neceſſary here to ſtate that Mrs. Semple is the God-daughter of the celebrated Dutcheſs of Kingſton; yet it need ſcarcely be told that that great lady is a very great favourite with the ſtill greater Empreſs of Ruſſia, at which court the firſt great lady now reſides.

To conceive that J. G. Semple would let ſlip ſo favourable an opportunity of improving his fortunes, would be but paying a very bad compliment to his penetration. As he knew the alliance, ſo he knew well how to introduce himſelf. Mr. Semple was a fine man, the lady had been a fine woman, and is ſtill a great wit; ſhe received him with hoſpitality, and promiſed to introduce him to the Empreſs. The promiſe of a court lady was never

yet

yet violated. Mr. Semple was introduced, and promiſed promotion.

But ſtrange was the revolution in the affairs of Mr. Semple.—A ſomething, a deſtiny which we all are liable to, threw a ſtumbling block in his way.—The Dutcheſs withdrew her favours, the Empreſs recanted her promiſe, and Mr. Semple decamped without waiting for the expected promotion.

The great actions that were the ſpring of this event are recorded in page 95 of theſe Memoirs.

But although we are not at a loſs for ſo important a circumſtance in the life of Mr. Semple; yet we have the pleaſure of recording here one ſmall ſpecimen of his ingenuity ere we bring him out of a country which was ſo unfortunate in his loſs. He *borrowed* the paſſport of the King's meſſenger, then on his road to England, and by quitting the character of a gentleman, and aſſuming that which the contents of the paſſport afforded him, he got ſafe into Germany, where he talked in the language of the fellow upon Highgate-hill, who bid the Lord Mayor of London kiſs his ———.

At Cologne he diſtinguiſhed himſelf in a manner no ways derogatory to that aſſurance which had already made him pretty conſpicuous in England and Ruſſia. Whether the incident we are going to relate happened at this, or at a ſubſequent

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period, we are not certain; be the time when it will, it makes but a very little difference to the reader. It is a fact, and therefore the order of time totally immaterial.

Baron Hompeſch, a German nobleman, was reſident at Cologne, when Mr. Semple arrived there, by which the latter had an opportunity of exerciſing thoſe wits which ſeemed to have been his only ſupport for ſome years. He addreſſed himſelf to the Baron with all the politeneſs he was capable of, and that was no ſmall portion. He ſtiled himſelf a Major in his Britannic Majeſty's ſervice, deſcribed himſelf of a noble family in Scotland, and boaſted his great intimacy with the firſt of the Engliſh nobility; concluding with his relationſhip to the lady who had given him ſo kind a reception at the Court of Peterſburgh.

Having thus ſtated his conſequence, he then opened his misfortunes.—He had been ſo unhappy, he ſaid, as to kill two Engliſh gentlemen, one at London, the other at Bath, in a duel. From his conſequence and misfortunes, he then began to diſplay his legal abilities.—The laws of England, he ſaid, were very ſevere on the laws of honour, and cruelly deemed that a murder, which the laws of other countries took no cognizance of, and by this cruelty he was compelled to fly for ſafety to a foreign country.—His mind was exceedingly diſtreſſed, but he was much more ſo by the ſitua-

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tion in which his pecuniary affairs then ſtood; and both thoſe cauſes emboldened him to ſeek the ſupport of a nobleman, whoſe ſoul was ever awake to the ſenſations of humanity, particularly when a gentleman and a diſtreſſed officer put in his plea to thoſe feelings.

His manner, his appearance, his language, operated effectually on the Baron.—The eye of pity was thrown on ſo unhappy and ſo unfortunate a caſe. The Baron's purſe beſtowed the moſt liberal relief, and his houſe afforded a moſt comfortable aſylum.—The Baron's friendſhip and ſervices kept pace with the Major's misfortunes, and he promiſed to uſe all his intereſt to get him reſtored to his native country.

But this extenſion of friendſhip was not all that the Major prevailed on the Baron to exert—Mr. Semple wiſhed to return to England with his Majeſty's promiſe of a pardon in caſe of conviction; for, added he, " As a gentleman, and a man of honour, I muſt ſurrender myſelf up to the laws of the land, and take my trial for the murders."

The Baron, who perhaps better underſtood the conſtitution of Germany, and ſome other northern nations than that of England, and knew that whilſt the laws of the land was tying a halter round a man's neck, the monarch was tying round the ribband of ſome honorary order round his ſhoulders, readily conſented to this requeſt, and aſſured Mr.

Semple, he would uſe all his influence to procure the King's previous pardon, as ſoon as ever he ſhould arrive in England, which would be in the ſpace of two or three months.

To relieve the reader from any ſuſpence which he may be thrown into, by Mr. Semple's narrative of duels he never fought, and of men he never killed, we muſt let him into a ſecret which it is not impoſſible he may have already diſcovered. The whole tale was an artful deception, trumped up for the mere purpoſe of living on the Baron's bounty as a man of conſequence and faſhion, which were always the ambition of James George Semple, Eſq. Beſides, as he knew that his happy effrontery and external appearance could ſupport the character, ſo he knew that the only method of carrying his plan into execution, was to put himſelf upon a level with the Baron. We may be liberal to the poor and baſe born; but effectual relief and friendſhip are only extended to our equals.

In this noble ſtate did Major Semple live at Cologne till the time of the Baron's departure for England, when the Major accompanied him, not in his ſuite, but as a friend and companion. On their arrival, the Baron mentioned the caſe to ſome of his Majeſty's miniſters; by whom he was informed, that the requeſt was impoſſible to be granted, as all offences here were puniſhed or pardoned

doned according to the merits of the caſe, and the favourable or aggravating circumſtances attending it.

Soon after the Baron's arrival it happened that Count Hompeſch, the Baron's ſon, came from Germany to England with diſpatches. After having negotiated his buſineſs, he was preparing to return; when the Baron adviſed Major Semple to accompany him, and he ſhould have his recommendations there. This was readily agreed to, but a little delay propoſed, in order to ſettle his private affairs in England. The Count would have been happy in the Major's company, but ſubmitted to the mortification of ſailing without him. His luggage, however, was large, and as it could not be all got together by the time, eſpecially as he purchaſed many valuable Engliſh articles, the Major kindly took charge of the remainder, which by ſome damn'd accident or other on the road, never got over to Cologne, although as we are informed, it was worth between four and five hundred pounds. It is hardly worth our notice to obſerve that in a viſit to Mr. Richardſon, ſugar-baker, of Stamford-ſtreet, over Black-fryar's bridge, with the Baron, he borrowed five ſhillings of Mr. Richardſon's maid ſervant for want of change to pay a coach, and forgot to return it.

What became of Mr. Semple immediately after this loſs, we are not poſitive, but we find him at

Dieppe, in about a year afterwards, hiring an Engliſh fiſhing ſmack, there being no packet boat, for the expreſs purpoſe of bringing over diſpatches to government here, as he declared. For this conveyance he agreed to give fourteen guineas. When he arrived at Harwich, not having caſh about him to pay it, and being alſo in want of money to pay the chaiſe to town, as he told the man, he borrowed ſix guineas of him (Mr. Thomas Welſh, living at No. 7, Gun-alley, Wapping) with whom Mr. Semple travelled over the ocean in the name and deſcription of Colonel Crawford.

But a ſingular inſtance of his ingenuity ought not to eſcape us. It exhibits his addreſs, and the fertility of his genius too powerfully to be ſuppreſſed.

He applied to Mr. Lovett, ſtable-keeper and hackney-man, of Stratton Street, Piccadilly, in order to ſend an expreſs down to Lord Saliſbury, near Watford. The expreſs was ſent, and contained an account of a near relation of her ladyſhip's and his own alſo, who, Mr. Semple ſaid, was arreſted for three hundred pounds, mentioning the perſon's name, and that ſixty or eighty guineas would compromiſe the affair. This letter, by the expreſs, was delivered to his Lordſhip, as he was riding near the houſe, but to which his Lordſhip returned this verbal anſwer, "*That he knew of no ſuch perſon, or relation, and therefore there was no anſwer.*

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The obvious meaning of this expreſs was, firſt to make himſelf appear a perſon of conſequence and faſhion by his connections; and, ſecondly, upon the ſtrength of it, to get credit of Mr. Lovett. The ſcheme had its effect. He ran a few pounds into Mr. Lovett's debt; who, having ſome little knowledge of the world, began to ſuſpect the Major, and then put a *curb* to his credit.

Many and vain were his applications after Mr. Semple for payment. Fortunately he obſerved him one day in a hackney coach, and the Major, in his turn, diſcovered Mr. Lovett. He kept himſelf, like a hare in his form, at the bottom of the coach, whence Mr. Lovett ſtarted him by opening the coach door.—Pleas, apologies, and excuſes, flowed as freely as the Thames at a ſpring tide.—His Honour and his Maker he offered as bail for the performance of his promiſes, but Mr. Lovett would neither take the ſecurity, nor part with his game; and ſwore, wherever the coach went, thither he would go alſo.

When the Major found that there was no getting rid of his companion, he declared it was hard that he ſhould be compelled to apply perſonally to his agents for a few pounds; but as neceſſity had no law, if Mr. Lovett would accompany him to Meſſrs. Cox and Mair's, in Craig's-Court, Charing-Croſs, he would pay him.

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There is no doubt but Mr. Lovett readily conſented to the propoſal.—They drove to Craig's Court, where he got out of the coach; and as Mr. Lovett well knew it was no thoroughfare, he continued at the corner of the court, and ſaw him go into Meſſrs. Cox and Mair's.

After waiting an hour he began to grow impatient. He enquired at the agents for Major Semple:—They knew no ſuch man:—But the ſervant maid informed him, that a gentleman, about an hour ago, had been there, and told her he was purſued by bailiffs, and begged her to let him eſcape through the houſe by the back door into Scotland-yard, which out of compaſſion ſhe had done. By this double, Mr. Lovett loſt his game, and never got ſcent again.

But the circle of his ingenuities were not limited to Barons, Counts, Watermen, and Hackney-Coachmen; the Keepers of Coffee-Houſes and Hotels experienced their pleaſant effects likewiſe.

He frequented Wood's hotel, under Covent-Garden Piazza; and although Mr. Wood has, to our knowledge, too much good ſenſe to be amuſed by the inventive genius of plauſible pretenders, when their artillery is levelled at the purſe, yet Major Semple proved an over-match for Mr. Wood's general prudence.

The Major came there one day, and deſired to know for how many ſuch a gentleman (the reader muſt

muſt excuſe our naming him) had ordered dinner? —Mr. Wood replied, " He had had no orders." —Good God! ſaid the Major, Dick is a ſad dog! How neglectful! Why, Wood, ſeveral of us agreed laſt night to dine with you to-day at ſeven ſhillings and ſixpence a head, excluſive of wines. —Get dinner ready at five o'clock for a dozen. Mr. Wood was retiring to give orders, when the Major called him back :—Here, hark ye, Wood, ſaid he, damme if I am not come out and left my purſe on the table :—Lend me ſix guineas. Mr. Wood lent the money, the Major departed, an elegant dinner was dreſſed, but neither that ſad dog, Dick, nor any of his party, came to partake of it.

We trace him likewiſe to a lodging at Knightſbridge with a Mr. Sadgrove, a hair-dreſſer there, in the name of Major Harrold. To Mr. Sadgrove's he brought with him an elderly gentleman, whom he was pleaſed to ſtile his father, and to dignify with the appellation of Lord Lyſle.—When Mr. Sadgrove apologiſed for the inconvenience he ſhould be under in accommodating a nobleman—Pſhaw, ſaid the Major, put him into my bed, and make up one any how for me.—Thus were the nobleman and his ſon accommodated, till Mr. Sadgrove began to trouble his lodgers for ſome of thoſe reaſons which make all inconveniencies trifling to the perſon who ſubmits to them.

But as Major Harrold was at a loſs for that kind of eloquence, and as ſome few neighbouring tradeſmen applied for the ſame ſort of oratory, Mr. Sadgrove's lodgings began to be thought too far from town, and conſequently the Major removed, but without giving legal notice thereof.

Many were the ſearches Mr. Sadgrove made to make him ſpeak properly, but they were fruitleſs. Having at laſt traced Major Harrold, Mr. Sadgrove received from him the following curious letter.

Mr. Sadgrove,

I received yeſterday from the gentleman who is with me, a letter which you meant for me, but which he opened owing to the addreſs. I aſſure you that upon my word that before Thurſday next I will pay you the money I remain in your debt; but *I muſt beg you will not mention that I am in town to any body.* I will call myſelf at your houſe and pay you. If I promiſe you ſooner I may not be able to keep my word, but then I aſſure you I will not *faill, but I beg you won't mention having ſeen me.* Friday afternoon.

P. S. I again aſſure you that I will not *faill* on Thurſday to pay you—*only don't mention that you have ſeen me.*

Directed to Mr. Sadgrove, Hair-Dreſſer, No. 10, Glouceſter-Row, Knightſbridge.

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The reaſon of the Major's deſiring ſecrecy is too apparent to need explanation.—But to do him all poſſible juſtice, we muſt add, that he declined putting Sadgrove to any expence about the letter, as Major Harold paid the porter, and indorſed it ſo.

Having done him that piece of juſtice, truth obliges us to own, that a German ſervant who was with him there, [Peter Frankin] he diſpatched to Oſtend under pretence of preparing lodgings for him there, and who is now at Duſſeldorf; having firſt in caſh borrowed, and wages, ſtood indebted to the poor fellow near upon twenty pounds.

Nor was he leſs active, during his ſtay at Knightſbridge, among hackney coachmen, than he had been with Mr. Lovett. Under pretence of wanting change, he borrowed of ſeveral the paltry ſums of ten, of twelve, and fifteen ſhillings, which he never returned. If, therefore, we compare them and the former circumſtance together, we are afraid that we muſt conclude, that Major Harrold paid Mr. Sadgrove out of a principle of fear, and that he ſtands ſtill indebted to Peter Frankin, from the principle of never having meant to pay him at all.

We muſt confeſs, however, that Mr. Sadgrove's luck was rather ſingular. Mr. Dalby, of New-Bond-Street, was not quite ſo fortunate. By the means of a fine carriage, and a fine inſinuating tongue, he not only got trifles to the amount of ſix or ſeven pounds, but likewiſe obtained ten pounds in caſh.

He did indeed, when he purchaſed the goods of Mr. Dalby, offer two guineas in part, which he ſaid was all the caſh he had about him; but then to take two guineas in part of ſix from a gen-

tleman of Major Semple's appearance, Mr. Dalby was afraid might have been conſidered as ungenteel, and perhaps conſtrued into an affront: He therefore politely gave him credit for the whole, and without ſcruple lent the Major ten pounds more to it.

To Mr. Gladwell, wine-merchant, No. 52, Piccadilly, he introduced himſelf as Major Semple, and ſaid, he came recommended by the Earl of Kerry.—The purport of the viſit to Mr. Gladwell was to purchaſe ſome wines, particularly Tent, of which he underſtood that Mr. Gladwell had ſome that was very curious, as a preſent for Lady Coventry, who was moſt exceedingly fond of Tent wine.—A quantity to a conſiderable amount was agreed on, and a carter ſent in the afternoon to fetch it away; who, on Mr. Gladwell's enquiring, told him, that he had lived with the Major fifteen years, and he was a very worthy honeſt Gentleman.—The wines were packed up and ſent, and the Major came in a day or two to give a ſecond order; but Mr. Gladwell having, from ſome little enquiry, learnt what was ſufficiently ſatisfactory to him, declined executing it.

In the name of Major Campbell he alſo paid a viſit to Mr. Johnſon, wine-merchant, of Bruton-Place, and had the pleaſure of drinking that Gentleman's health in ſome very fine-flavoured Claret and Madeira.

But though his operations were daily directed againſt tradeſmen, yet the nobility likewiſe were peſtered with his impertinent aſſiduities.

He frequently wrote letters to Lord Saliſbury, and Sir Thomas Dundas, in Arlington-ſtreet, in the name of Major Campbell, till directions were given

given by his Lordſhip and Sir Thomas, neither to to admit or receive a letter from him. Defeated thus, he applied to the porter of the latter for the loan of half-a-guinea, to pay for the carriage of ſome goods which were in Piccadilly, brought to town by a ſtage-waggon, and which he could not ſend home directly, as he had left his purſe on the table.—*Tel maître, tel valet*—the party-coloured tribe ape their maſters, and the porter in this caſe profited by following the Baronet's example.

But though thus defeated at Lord Saliſbury's and Sir Thomas Dundas's, his frequent viſits there were the occaſion of making him ſome trifling amends in the ſame ſtreet.—Greenwood and Hudſon, ſeedſmen, at the corner of it, from ſeeing his frequent viſits at both houſes, made no ſcruple of giving him credit, in the name of Major George, for ſeveral pounds worth of flower ſeeds, &c. From which we may draw this obſervation, that James George Semple was like a rabbit in a warren, no ſooner out of one hole than he was in at another.

Nor were his dexterities leſs practiſed upon the publican than the Peer.—Mr. Henderſon, of the Roſe and Crown public-houſe, in the Haymarket, had lived ſervant with a Captain Cunningham, of the Royals; which, by ſome means or other, Mr. Semple was acquainted with.—He came therefore one day in a coach to Mr. Henderſon, ſaying he was ſent by Captain Cunningham to borrow a guinea, and called himſelf Captain Maxwell. The guinea was lent, and alſo two ſhillings to pay for the coach. Had he upon that occaſion aſked for ten, he might as eaſily have obtained it.

Another guinea he obtained of Mr. Carter, riding-maſter, of Chapel-ſtreet, Groſvenor-ſquare,

by pretending that officers had been after him to arreſt him, and he wanted to eſcape in a coach.

The ſame ſpecimen of his abilities, Mr. Lancaſter, coachmaker, of Theobald's-Road, experienced, and under the ſame pretence, but in the name of Major Stewart.

Having taken a lodging at Mr. Lock's, No. 17, Upper Mary-le-Bone-ſtreet, where he did not go by any name but that of the Major, Mr. Lock in a ſhort time diſcovered who his lodger was, and accoſted him with a How do you do, Major Semple? The Major moved off rather precipitately, leaving a trunk with a few contents behind him, which juſt indemnified Mr. Lock. But, as Major Semple had, ſoon after that march, the honour of making a figure in a public news-paper, we ſhould neither do our Readers nor the Major juſtice, to let ſlip ſo favourable an opportunity of laying before them the following ſmall notice which chance has luckily thrown into our hands.

" If J. G. Semple, who left his lodgings at " Daniel Lock's, No. 17, Upper Marybone-" ſtreet, near Portland-Chapel, does not fetch the " trunk away which he left there, in 14 days from " this date, the ſame will be appraiſed and ſold.

" Witneſs my hand, DANIEL LOCK."
" May 29, 1786."

It was impoſſible for us not to avail ourſelves of ſo authentic a document, however trifling; but the more material inſtances of his abilities, which, like the ſplendour of an Eaſtern Bulſe, annihilates the faint radiance of a Briſtol ſtone, totally eclipſe all ſuch petty efforts of occaſional genius.

To

To Mr. Wetton, of Bruton-ſtreet, confectioner, he gave a large order for confectionary, which was not executed; but though Mr. Semple failed in that, he was accommodated with half-a-dozen pots of ſweetmeats gratis.

The Reader, no doubt, has already ſeen that no ſituation in life was too high or too low for Mr. Semple to practiſe upon. From Baron Hompeſch to hackney-coachmen, mankind were alike to him; nay, a poor fellow of the name of Lucas, a porter at the Temple-gate, he condeſcended to borrow ſix ſhillings of to pay a hackney-coachman, under the pretence of having nothing but Bank notes and bills about him.

Nor was Mr. M'Kenzie, of the Rhedarium, Park-lane, more guarded againſt his enterpriſes. Of him he obtained a carriage, and the hire of ſeveral, by the name of Major Winter. Fortune, however, ſtood M'Kenzie's friend. The Major having offered it for ſale to Mr. Careleſs, maſter of the White-Hart, at Watford, who happened to know the carriage and owner, he ſent to Mr. M'Kenzie, who came down to Watford, and iſſued out a *capias* againſt the Major, commonly known by the name of the Brewer's Ejectment Writ:—The Brewer's Ejectment Writ is this; when publicans don't pay, or are ſuſpected of decamping, or for any other *reaſonable cauſe*, the Brewer ſends his men, horſes, and drays, very legally breaks open the cellar-door, and very coolly draws away every beer-butt therein. Mr. M'Kenzie, therefore, wiſely took the ſame method; he ſent his men and horſes, and brought the carriage back to the Rhedarium.

But

But although Mr. M'Kenzie was ſo far fortunate, yet he and Mr. Careleſs were jointſufferers by letting horſes and carriages out for the Major's uſe.

Mr. Lycett, of Whitechapel, a coach-maker, was, however, not quite ſo lucky as Mr. M'Kenzie:—Mr. James George Semple, in the name of J. G. Harrold, of the Hague, obtained of him a carriage to uſe for a fortnight; for which the Major was to pay Mr. Lycett 5s. per day. The Major ſent a pair of horſes, which brought it away; and he forgot ever after to pay for the uſe of, or to return the carriage. Nay, the Major even forgot his way to Whitechapel. How far this little ingenuity comes under the ſtatute of felonies, will be ſeen hereafter; as the Major was tried for it.*

Mr. Greenſill, ſilverſmith, in the Strand, alſo experienced the addreſs and dexterity of this ſingular genius. The Major had, by his uſual dexterity, inſinuated himſelf into the opinion of a Gentleman, an Officer in his Majeſty's ſervice, a man of honour and honeſty, to mention whoſe name would be cruel as well as indelicate. His own feelings at having been ſo impoſed on, and which was the cauſe of ſeveral tradeſmen giving credit to James George Semple, is a circumſtance of ſufficient mortification, without any additional aggravation of ours.—At Mr. Greenſill's they toſſed up for ſome buckles; and in a few days after, on the ſtrength of his having been in that Gentleman's company, Mr. Greenſill gave him credit for a few pounds worth of ſilver goods in the name of Major Cunningham. Luckily he obtained no more. Had he deſired it, Mr. Greenſill

* See the Trial, pages 105 to 116.

fill would readily have credited him for fifty or an hundred pounds.

One general obſervation we beg leave to make. Wherever Mr. Semple attempted to obtain, or was ſucceſsful in obtaining either money or goods, the impoſition was founded on his real or pretended knowledge of ſome reſpectable character who he knew was acquainted with, or was a cuſtomer to, the perſon he applied to, either to borrow caſh, or take up goods upon credit.—This artifice was ſeconded by the deception of his own perſonal appearance, which, added to the natural plauſibility of his language, was as ſpecious and as alluring as the Grand Deceiver's, who, by the *honey-dew* of his tongue, and, as Voltaire ſays, by the length of a ſhining tail, impoſed on the natural credulity of the firſt frail fair. This will, once for all, account for his ſucceſs in that line of Swindling, at which he was ſo complete an adept, and in ſome meaſure apologize for the credulity of thoſe who have been ſufferers through his adroitneſs.

As explanatory of this, we give the following fact:

He lately, and which the Reader will ſee, with an aſſurance equal to his artifice, applied himſelf to Mr. Hankey, of Upper Harley-ſtreet, Cavendiſh-ſquare, although a total ſtranger, and requeſted the ſum of ſeventeen or eighteen guineas, which he ſaid he was much in need of, to aſſiſt a brother Officer, who was then in cuſtody for debt. To take off a little of the edge of a ſurpriſe which ſuch a ſtrange importunity might naturally occaſion, he added, that he was a Major in his Majeſty's ſervice, and well known to, and intimate

mate with, Mr. Hankey's brother, or he would not have taken ſuch a liberty.

As appearances were for him, Mr. Hankey ſaid, that his brother would be in town that day, and would dine with him at five o'clock, at which time Mr. Semple was deſired to call, and actually invited to dinner. To a man of leſs *nonchalance* than James George Semple, this anſwer would have been a complete rebuff. But his motto was, "*In for a penny, in for a pound.*" He thanked Mr. Hankey, and boldly accepted the invitation.

At a quarter before five, having called in his out-poſts of humour, anecdote, tale, and repartee, and joined them with his main guard, *Impudence*, he knocked at Mr. Hankey's door.—The ſervants uſhered him up ſtairs, and he was introduced to the Mr. Hankeys. The brother, whom Mr. Semple pretended to be ſo intimate with, profeſſed he had not the ſmalleſt knowledge of him; when our Hero reminded him of this, that, and the other Gentleman, with whom Mr. Hankey had been at ſuch and ſuch places; aſſured him, that he, Mr. Semple, was often of the party, and lamented much the want of Mr. Hankey's recollection. The ſervant having announced dinner, they all ſat down, and the Major began to file off his out-poſts. As his converſation was entertaining, they were in no great hurry to loſe their viſitor; but when the ſubject of the viſit came on the carpet, as men of buſineſs they declined the requeſt.

So far unfortunate, Mr. Semple ſet his wits to work. A ſmaller ſum, he ſaid, perhaps would do to extricate his friend; and if Mr. Hankey would

would advance him five guineas, on a ſecurity of five guineas per annum on the Compaſſionate Liſt at the Pay-Office, he was ready to give Mr. Hankey a draught on Mr. Thomas, at the Office, who paid the money.

It being a caſe of ſome ſeeming compaſſion, interwoven with a delicacy in refuſing a Gentleman whom they had invited to dinner, Mr. Hankey advanced him the money, and Semple wrote the following letter.

SIR,

Mr. Hankey, of Fenchurch-ſtreet, has been kind enough to advance me five guineas on my promiſe of giving no other order to receive the ſmall penſion on the Compaſſionate Liſt but to him. I declare upon my honour that this is the only obligation I either have or ſhall give, and that when due to him and no other perſon—I will ſend the certificate.

I am, Sir,

London, July 4, 1786.

With much conſideration,

Your moſt obedient ſervant,

J. G. Semple.

Directed to

Mr. Thomas,
Pay-Office,
Whitehall,
London.

Now the truth is, he was not, nor ever was, on the Compaſſionate Liſt.—In fact, Mrs. Semple was.—Nor could he even receive the money for her, unleſs ſhe was preſent; for, it being payable to Mrs. Semple, even her certificate, order, or power of attorney, would be no juſtification of the payment; ſhe muſt receive it in perſon; and as Mr. Thomas knows and performs his duty with as much exactneſs as fidelity, he certainly never would pay Mr. Hankey on any ſuch certificate of Mr. Semple's. We are afraid, therefore, that the conſciouſneſs of having done, what Mr. Hankey conceived, a generous act, muſt be his ſole reward.

By contraſting this conduct with the following little ſpecimen of his abilities, the Reader muſt ſoon ſee the different degrees of light and ſhade in his compoſition. This ſame James George Semple, who could introduce himſelf to Baron Hompeſch and Meſſrs. Hankeys, had been running about the town all day in an hackney-coach, and by ſtepping into Mr. Francis Sykes's, in South-Audley-ſquare, under a pretended buſineſs, he bilked the poor fellow of his whole fare.

In ſhort, the noblemen's houſes he frequented daily under this device, made his perſon as familiar to the great as to the little world. The title of Major became as alarming as the appearance of a wolf at Spa during the winter ſeaſon, and the doors became equally guarded againſt his entering them. The compariſon holds good, with this degree of difference; the wolf prouls at midnight, Major Semple ravaged at noon-day.

By this practice of his, the reader muſt obſerve that no character or reputation was ſafe when a guinea was the object of Mr. Semple.

Should any perſon be ſurpriſed at his ſucceſs, we beg him to recollect an anecdote of the late celebrated Dr. Rock.

He was ſtanding one day at his door on Ludgate-hill, when a real doctor of phyſic paſſed, who had learning and abilities, but whoſe modeſty was the true cauſe of his poverty: "How comes it," ſays he to the quack, "that you, without educa-"tion, without ſkill, without the leaſt knowledge "of the ſcience, are enabled to live in the ſtyle "you do?—You keep your town-houſe, your "carriage, and your country-houſe; whilſt I, "allowed to poſſeſs ſome knowledge, have nei-"ther, and can hardly pick up a ſubſiſtence!—"Why, look ye," ſaid Rock, ſmiling, "how "many people do you think have paſſed ſince you "aſked me the queſtion?"—"Why," anſwered the doctor, "perhaps a hundred."—"And how "many out of that hundred, think you, poſſeſs "common ſenſe?"—"Poſſibly one," anſwered the doctor. "Then," ſaid Rock, "that one "comes to you; and I take care to get the other "ninety-nine!"

In conformity to that doctrine, Mr. Semple met a repulſe in Mr. Clark, ſadler, of Great Portland-ſtreet. He attempted to obtain two ſaddles by the name of Major Gray, an American officer; but Mr. Clark, being the one out of the foregoing hundred, declined the trouble of executing the order.

Mr. Cecil, ſhoe-maker, of Leadenhall-ſtreet, was not, however, quite ſo much on his guard as Mr. Clark. He came to that gentleman in the name of Major Harrold, and ordered two pair of boots and ſome ſhoes to be ſent to him, by a ſtage-coach, down to Park Hall, whither he was immediately going. The order was completed, and ſent. Two days after, Mr. Cecil's journeyman eſpied Major Harrold at the Queen's Arms, Newgate-ſtreet. The Major was confuſed, nay he even bluſhed. He deſired the man to make his compliments to his maſter, and tell him that he would call and pay him in a day or two, and begged that the man would not mention his ſeeing him to any body elſe, as he was in town on very particular and private buſineſs.

At Meſſieurs Dixon and Co. of Aldgate, ſhoemakers, he played the ſame game as he had done with Mr. Cecil; but with theſe gentlemen he found the name of Semple inconvenient, and therefore aſſumed that of Major Kennedy.

In the name of Major Grant (pretending that he came from Peterſburgh on an embaſſy to this court, and that he had buſineſs with Mr. Pitt) he had the ſame ſucceſs with Mr. Stewart, perfumer, Broad-ſtreet, and obtained articles of perfumery to a degree that enabled him to completely ſtock the toilette of a fine gentleman; for which the Major now ſtands indicted. And to ſweeten his tooth, as well as his perſon, he applied to Mr. Andrews, of Wimpole-ſtreet, fruiterer, and was no leſs ſucceſsful in the name of Major Stewart.

Innkeepers

Innkeepers alſo, as well as keepers of hotels and coffee-houſes, experienced his uſual diligence. Of Mr. Bolton of the Saracen's-Head, Aldgate, he borrowed two guineas in the name of J. G. Harrold, Eſquire; which when he borrowed under the pretence of wanting caſh to diſcharge ſome hackney-coach hire and charges for the carriage of goods, he wrote the above name in Mr. Bolton's book. On receiving the caſh, the Major took the pen and defaced it, ſaying it was too trifling a ſum for *his* name to remain in a book about. It however remains clear to be ſeen; and it is equally clear, that, trifling as the ſum was, it ſtill remains unpaid.

We have already ſtated that he obtained a carriage of Mr. Lycett, of White-Chapel, coach-maker. But as a horſe to ride is of no uſe without a ſaddle, ſo a carriage is of no uſe without horſes to draw it. For this purpoſe he applied to Mr. Tatterſall, of Hyde-Park Corner, and purchaſed two horſes, for which he gave a draught on Drummonds. The value of that draught the reader may readily gueſs. It was not worth the five guineas Mr. Tatterſall lent him; for Major Semple had not at that time any looſe caſh about him, and he had alſo once more unfortunately left his purſe on the table. The great convenience of theſe horſes was to draw away Mr. Lycett's carriage; and for a few days Major Semple lived in as ſplendid a ſtyle as if he had been on full pay.

Nor did Mr. Fozard, ſtable-keeper, of Park-Lane, eſcape the Major's obſervation. Under pretence of extenſive acquaintances and high connections, he obtained ſome credit, and borrowed a ſoli-

a ſolitary guinea, which he was reduced to, he ſaid, by loſing his purſe by an accidental fall from his horſe. But Mr. Fozard having taken ſome little pains to ſatisfy himſelf about the Major, they were the means of producing the following letter from him.

I am Curſedly perſecuted for the few things that I owe, which all together, even including yours, don't make forty pounds, the money I have ſpent ſince I have been in Town prevents me from having it in my power to Apply for any more. There is yet a good ſum due me, which I ſhall certainly receive before the end of the week or thereabouts, and even this day if I durſt come up to Town I was to have had paid me a ſmall ſum which is ſufficient to clear me of your debt. I came yeſterday down here where I mean to remain till I have ſatisfied the demands that are againſt me, an acquaintance who comes to London this day will deliver you this, he I hope will alſo receive the money for me, I expected. I beg it of you to be aſſured that I will pay you, the time is now drawing near on which I promiſed to pay every thing, ſure no man was ever ſo much talked of or teazed for ſo trifling a debt as mine are, there has been more pains took to hurt me, than ever there was any man. I can prove having ſpent and paid above 300l. in the firſt 2 or 3 weeks of my arrivall in London and what I owe as I told you before wont make 40l. the noiſe they have made has prevented them from being paid for they hurted my credit ſo much, that I am afraid to aſk any body to aſſiſt me, I could eaſily have borrowed more money than would have cleared me if they had let me alone Mr. Dalby certainly was very kind to me at firſt but he talked a great deal afterward; however the aſſiſtance he gave me I ſhall never

never forget and moſt undoubtedly will pay him. I think I can truſt to your not taking there *example and you may be aſſured that I will pay you*

I am Sir

Your moſt Obedient

Monday Morning 8 *oClock* *Servant*

Woolwich. J. G. SEMPLE.

PRAY DONT MENTION WHERE I AM.

Directed to Mr. Fozard.

The reader need not be reminded that this letter was not written at Woolwich, for the Major was then in the Spring-Garden coffee-houſe.

In one of his exploits, however, there ſeems to have been a momentary impulſe of generous honeſty. He had been rattling about the town, as uſual, in an hackney-coach, and had, as uſual, bilked the coachman, by leaving him and the coach in waiting in Windmill-ſtreet, near the Haymarket. He called at Mr. Skillern's muſic-ſhop, in St. Martin's Lane, the corner of St. Martin's church-yard, and begged Mr. Skillern would ſend up his man to tell the coachman not to wait, but to call the next day at Mr. Skillern's at two o'clock, and the money ſhould be left for him. Mr. Skillern, although a ſtranger to the Major, (nor could he recollect him, notwithſtanding the latter wanted to perſuade him he had been a great cuſtomer) ſent his man up, during which time Major Semple explained the reaſon by ſaying, He was purſued by bailiffs, and could not return to the coach. The coachman certainly called; but the above ſeeming momentary impulſe of generous honeſty never again influenced the breaſt of the Major.

A ſimilar

A ſimilar inſtance of his ingenuity he had practiſed on another coachman, who was more fortunate than his preceding brother-whip. He happened afterwards to meet Major Semple as he was driving his hackney-coach up Bedford-Row, in company with another gentleman, who, on the coachman's jumping off the box, thought proper to decamp. Having bruſhed up to the Major, and being determined not to quit him, the latter went to ſeveral houſes in the neighbourhood to borrow the ſum of 1*l.* 13*s.* but was ſo unfortunate as not to ſucceed. His wits, however, being puſhed hard, he bethought himſelf of Mrs. Watſon, a lady who lives in Glouceſter-ſtreet, No. 42: thither he and the coachman went. He recollected that Lord Verney had lodged there. To this lady he applied, under the ſanction of being his Lordſhip's friend, and having viſited him there, for the above ſum to diſcharge the demand: he promiſed the coachman at firſt to call the next day at Mrs. Watſon's to leave the money; but this promiſe not being deemed ſatisfactory, and offering to go, the coachman reſolutely (how legally is another thing) locked Mrs. Watſon's door upon, and ſwore the Major ſhould not march without he was paid. Mrs. Watſon, ſeeing the gentleman thus diſtreſſed, promiſed to pay it the next day if the Major did not. The coachman was ſatisfied, and departed; as did the Major, with every promiſe and every apology he could ſuggeſt. Apologies and promiſes coſt him nothing. He never returned; and Mrs. Watſon was ſummoned by the coachman to the court of requeſts; and, rather than appear at ſuch a reputable

table and critical appendage to law and juſtice, ſhe paid the debt.

Hitherto we have treated our readers with a few of his ingenious devices in the metropolis. His abilities, however, were not ſo circumſcribed as to be confined to one ſcene of action. The country experienced his exploits in a manner no leſs diffuſive than in town. The two following we ſelect.

Having been obliged to a receſs from a very laborious ſeaſon of public buſineſs, he took an excurſion Northward. At Leiceſter he put up at the ſign of the Three Crowns, kept by Mr. Biſhop. Under the ſtale pretence of having left his pocket-book in town, he was, he ſaid, unfortunately without caſh to purſue his journey to Derby. Mr. Biſhop, taking Mr. Semple for what he really was not, viz. a gentleman, generouſly accommodated the unfortunate traveller with five guineas, in order to enable him to purſue his journey to Derby, for which Major Semple as freely gave Mr. Biſhop the following valuable ſecurity.

Leiceſter, Aug. 15th, 1785.

£. 5 : 5 : 0

At ſight pleaſe to pay to Meſſrs. Coare and Swayne, or Order, the ſum of Five Guineas, which you will place to my account.

WM. BISHOP.

Accepd J. G. SEMPLE

To J. G. Semple Eſquire
Spring Garden Coffee Houſe,
London.

Had the above acceptance been duly honoured, we never ſhould have had the opportunity of taking a copy of it. We ſhall therefore diſmiſs this piece of ingenuity with obſerving, that the Major's expences at Mr. Biſhop's (for he lived in ſome ſtyle) aroſe to as much as the draught, both which were ſatisfied much in the ſame way.

But, having travelled with the Major to Leiceſter, we beg the reader will march with us a little farther; and at Matlock in Derbyſhire we will indulge ourſelves with a halt.

At Matlock Mr. Semple found it convenient to ſtay a few days, during which time he ingratiated himſelf into the company of ſeveral gentlemen; two of whom he knew, and on whom the Major exerted the utmoſt efforts of his avocations.

He ſoon ſcraped an acquaintance with a Mr. T——, a gentleman who lives in town; and having found out, as Scrub ſays, who he was, where he came from, and whither he was going, the Major opened his battery. He talked of his great ſervices to government, his intimacy with the gentleman who is now the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Pitt; produced a letter of that gentleman's to him; and, in ſhort, conveyed into the mind of Mr. T. ſo high an opinion of his rank and conſequence, that on his requeſt Mr. T. readily accommodated him with ten guineas: but what the pretence was by which he obtained it we have forgot.

We have given the reader a ſhort bait at Matlock, and now beg leave to conduct him back to Leiceſter, where the Major declined troubling Mr. Biſhop. Perhaps he thought that a free horſe ought

ought not to be rode to death; and therefore he put up at Mr. Allamand's, the Three Cranes, where Mr. Semple appeared as great a gentleman as he had done at Mr. Biſhop's, and where Mr. Allamand treated him with equal civility.

From Leiceſter the Major came to town; and as during his ſtay at Matlock he had been induſtrious in cultivating thoſe acquaintances which were moſt likely to add to his reſpect and intereſt, ſo on his arrival here he was equally active in improving thoſe two material circumſtances in life.

Mr. R. a reſpectable bookſeller of New Bond-ſtreet, under the recommendation and acquaintance which Major Semple aſſumed with a gentleman, (whom he had honoured with his company in Germany, and thereby diſcovered that he dealt with Mr. R.) lent him ſeveral guineas at different times for an equal number of ducats, which ſaid ducats the Major left in pledge with Mr. R. but quite forgot ever to redeem.

Under a ſimilar pretence he viſited Mr. Jameſon, bookſeller, of the Strand, in the name of Major Cunningham; and left behind him, recorded in black and white, a fact that reflects equal honour on his dexterity.

At Mr. Banfield's, woollen-draper, No. 444, Strand, the Major alſo gave proofs of his ſingular abilities, by gaining credit for cloth for liveries, &c. &c. And Mr. Chowles, hatter, in Duke-ſtreet, Portland-ſtreet, behind Portland Chapel, on the 5th of July laſt, was kind enough to leave a hat at the bar of George's Coffee-houſe, for the Major's uſe, directed for J. Wilſon, Eſq. to

which was added—Pay nineteen ſhillings. When the Major's hand was in, he might have written nineteen pounds: it would have made no difference to Mr. Chowles. But, as

'There is a tide, in the affairs of men,
'Which, taken at the flood, leads on to FORTUNE;'

ſo James George Semple, Eſq. panting after the favours of ſo fickle a goddeſs, nobly plunged himſelf at laſt into the full tide, which ſafely conducted him into port; *id eſt*, his Majeſty's jail of Newgate, from whence that ſaid FORTUNE has ſo often dangled many a great man into eternity, with all the honours due to the important ſervices which he had ſo bravely laviſhed on his king and country. In plain Engliſh, the Major viſited Mr. Feltham, hatter, in Fleet-ſtreet, in February laſt; and in the following manner, as it appeared before the Lord Mayor, conferred the ſame favour on that gentleman he had ſo liberally beſtowed on many others. He called at Mr. Feltham's, in a chariot, attended by two footmen; and, after informing Mr. Feltham of his having been recommended to him by Mr. Richardſon, who he underſtood was his particular friend, he then produced a lady's riding-hat as a pattern for Mr. F. at the ſame time ordering him to make two of the ſame kind with all poſſible expedition, as he intended to take them to Ruſſia, and at that time told Mr. F. that he was a Major in the Ruſſian army.

Mr. F——, perceiving that the pattern which the Major had was made by him, agreeable to directions from Mr. Richardſon, for Baron Hompeſch,

peſch, a ſhort time before, was ſatisfied that every thing the ſuppoſed Major had uttered was founded in truth. The Major, after giving his directions to Mr. F——, went away, returned the next day in a hackney-coach, and at going requeſted his man to call another coach. Mr. F——, at this, expreſſed his ſurpriſe at his changing coaches, obſerving to him, that, in conſequence of the late regulation for hackney-coaches, it muſt become very expenſive. The other ſaid, he felt it rather an *uneaſy* one, and had a glaſs in the back, which was diſagreeable to him. Another coach was then called, and the priſoner departed. That the next day he called again, urged the finiſhing of the two ladies hats, paid Mr. F—— ſome compliments on his ſuperior ſtyle of cocking, and beſpoke one for his own wear: he then told Mr. F. that he had a bill on a merchant in the city for a hundred pounds, and that he would then go and receive it. Mr. F. aſked to ſee the bill, as in all probability he could direct him to the houſe, which would ſave the trouble of enquiring elſewhere: this he however declined, and departed. The next day he called again, ſaid he had juſt arrived in his brother's carriage from the country; but that being drove at an immoderate rate up to town, and being obliged to return to dinner, would be under the neceſſity of hiring poſt-horſes, as he could not think of harraſſing his brother's; and requeſted Mr. F. to lend him three guineas in gold, and half a guinea in ſilver, for the convenience of paying the turnpikes. Mr. F. having light gold in his pockets, and apprehenſive of its cauſing diſappointment to the Major,

borrowed

borrowed three new guineas from his next-door neighbour; which, with half a guinea in ſilver, he gave to the priſoner. On the Major's quitting the ſhop, a perſon at the door aſked Mr. F. if he knew him; and, on anſwering in the affirmative, was told by the ſtranger that he was miſtaken; that he was Semple, the notorious ſharper; but refuſed Mr. F. the power of making uſe of his name, which prevented Mr. F. from purſuing him at that time. Being however ſomewhat alarmed, he went to his friend Mr. Richardſon, who he imagined had recommended him; that Mr. Richardſon denied ever having done ſo, and declared he would not truſt him for a guinea, as he attempted to take him in for 40l. He then referred Mr. F. to Mr. G. of the Temple, who confirmed Mr. R.'s account of the priſoner, and recounted many other fraudulent acts of which he had been guilty. That from that time (Feb. 22) Mr. F. conſidered himſelf bound, by an indiſpenſable obligation, to bring to public juſtice a man who could, without remorſe, make a profeſſion of diſtreſſing the unwary; and that from that time he had taken every poſſible means of apprehending the priſoner, which, by his ſteady perſeverance, had at length proved effectual. That, in the courſe of his inquiries after the Major, he had been able to trace out ſome of the moſt nefarious acts that ever diſgraced an individual. Having ſome time ago received intelligence of his haunts, he procured a warrant; and, after being repeatedly diſappointed in apprehending him, as he was paſſing through Cheapſide, perceiving a coach anſwering the deſcription of that

uſed

uſed by Semple, he inſtantly called to the driver to ſtop, but without effect: he then purſued the carriage, and after a long chace attempted to leap in at the window; upon which the coachman ſtopped, and the Major eſcaped out of the oppoſite ſide. Mr. F. purſued. The Major then took ſhelter in a banker's ſhop, where he remained till the arrival of the officers from Bow-ſtreet, who conducted him in ſafety to Mr. Addington, who tranſmitted him to the Lord Mayor of London for examination.

So eminent a gentleman being committed to priſon, he ſoon became the topic of every company; and the public prints were equally as induſtrious to propagate his fame, as the world at large had been. We have ſelected the following, as it leads to a very curious reply of Mr. Semple's.

MORNING POST.

Mr. Feltham, who has ſpiritedly ſtepped forward to curb the induſtrious hero Major Semple in his career, aſſigned to the Lord Mayor, as reaſons for a ſecond examination, that ſeveral other charges of the ſame nature, more forcible than his, could be produced. Above 120 perſons attended, who propoſed to prove a multitude of ſimilar facts againſt the priſoner; but the Lord Mayor decided againſt the neceſſity of their appearance, as the caſe of Mr. F. was ſufficiently ſtrong in itſelf to ſupport a proſecution, and enſure the penalties of the law to the offender. His Lordſhip expreſſed his thanks to Mr. F. for the ſpirit he ſhewed in following up the delinquent. The groupe who ſuffered by the artifices of this genius, recited many

many and various exploits which peculiarly diſtinguiſhed his ingenuity. Among ſeveral, he contrived to ſwindle to a town in Derbyſhire, by *taking in* one ſide of the road on his departure, and the other on his return; in which he ſucceeded. He at another time aſſumed the character of an ambaſſador to the court of Ruſſia, and nearly ruined an unfortunate taylor, who prepared for him a wardrobe to near the value of 400l. a conſiderable part of which was delivered. He travelled to Ruſſia, whence the effects of his genius forced him to make a precipitate retreat to Sweden; from the capital of which his quarters were alſo beat up. In Flanders he ſucceeded upon the credulity of the public; and Calais did not eſcape the effects of his induſtry.

He is married into a family who are far from deſerving the conſequences of ſuch a connection. He has a wife whoſe character is irreproachable, by whom he had two children: he abandoned her, and took up with an unhappy woman, whom he has brought to ruin.

The Answer.

To the Printer of the Morning Chronicle.

"Sir,

"I am too ſenſible of the difficulty of vindicating my character to make the attempt; yet I would willingly ſhew to the public, through the channel of your unbiaſſed paper, that I am groſsly injured, and

and that nothing can authorize the aſſertions which have appeared in the public prints, but the unhappy ſituation into which my follies (to give them no ſeverer a name) have thrown me. Mr. F——, as yet the only perſon bound over to proſecute, has not heſitated to do his utmoſt to hurt me. He occaſioned my appearing a ſecond time at Guildhall, under the pretence of having twenty-three people to appear againſt me; but on calling over their names, two only were to be found. The whole of Mr. F——'s conduct towards me has been marked; during the examination of Mr. D. ſhoemaker, (who could not make any ſtory out) he went ſo far as to call to him in the preſence of the whole court, "Don't you remember what you ſaid to me this "morning?" I remarked that circumſtance immediately to the Lord Mayor; and, I believe, it had a proper effect.

"The papers have been filled with many different charges againſt me: the impoſſibility of anſwering them muſt be viſible to every body; I reſerve them for another occaſion. Sometime ago a ſtory, without any ground whatever, was fabricated, about my perſonating a certain noble Marquis, and ſwindling two maiden ſiſters out of their whole fortune, 1500l. This ſtory, groundleſs as it was, and contradicted with authority, has again been repeated. It is alſo aſſerted, that I have nearly

 ruined

ruined a taylor, by aſſuming the character of an ambaſſador to the court of Ruſſia, and obtaining from him cloaths to the amount of 400l. May I beg to know the name of this taylor? and if the perſon who gave the intelligence is not, from motives of fear or ſhame, obliged to conceal his, I ſhould be glad to be indulged with it. It is alſo ſaid, that I was obliged to make a precipitate retreat from the capital of Sweden: in anſwer to this, I can only ſay, that I have been in almoſt every capital in Europe; the capital of Sweden I never was in during my life, and, as I have ſaid before, it is almoſt the only one.

"I cannot ſuppoſe any other reaſon for filling the papers with theſe groundleſs charges againſt me, but the malicious intention of injuring me in the eyes of thoſe who have ſome friendſhip for me, and the ſtill more wicked one of prejudicing the judges and jury againſt me. I am ſorry to confeſs, there are people who may with reaſon complain of me; Mr. F—— certainly with truth cannot. I declare I will do my endeavours to ſettle as ſoon as poſſible all the demands againſt me.

"I ought not to finiſh this without taking particular notice of the very humane treatment I have received from the Lord Mayor: the kind attentions of Mr. Miller, the city marſhal, merit my warmeſt acknowledgments. Since my confinement I

have

have received every indulgence that the keeper of the priſon can with propriety give me.

I am, SIR,

Your moſt obedient,

And very humble ſervant,

July, 18, 1786. J. G. SEMPLE."

To comment upon this would be making a parade of logical abilities, and a waſte of pen, ink, and paper. It was our duty to give it becauſe the *audi alteram partem* ought never to be departed from. One obſervation only we beg leave to make: the Major acknowledges having been in almoſt every court in Europe but that of Sweden, and that court he denies ever having been in. Mark the poſition; and then what, from his own aſſertion, is the natural concluſion? Why, that the *precipitate retreat* was not from Sweden, but from ſome other court in Europe; moſt of which he allows he has been at. When great men commit blunders, they are ſure to be monſtrous ones. Had Major, or James George Semple, Eſq. or Mr. Semple, made no anſwer, it would have afforded no room to litigate his literary abilities. Had Peterſburg been ſubſtituted for Copenhagen, the Major muſt have been mute.

But being now in *ſalva cuſtodia*, and the Major left to his private meditations, we muſt beg the reader to drop him till the period of his appearance at the bar of the Old Bailey, which was on Tueſ-

day the 24th of July laſt; where he made his entré, with the Turnkey of Newgate on one ſide, and a certain knight of the poſt, vulgarly called Jack Ketch, on the other, to anſwer a charge made by Mr. Lycett; vide page 27.

The Major bowed to the court—he bowed to the jury—he bowed to the audience—three bows. —His honourable attendants, by the power of ſenſitive ſympathy, bowed alſo—They felt the force of attraction in—the neck. Whilſt they bowed, a ſide-glance of commiſeration darted on the Major, who bluſhed full as much as a modern made peer when introduced by two of his friends, at the bar of a ſtill greater aſſembly, with all his bluſhing honours about him.

He marched majeſtically forward—He was called on to—hold up his hand! Degrading humiliation! Nothing moves one ſo much as a great man in diſtreſs! He was inſulted with all the inſolence of official interrogation, and aſked, "*How "ſay you,* JAMES GEORGE HARROLD, *otherwiſe* "SEMPLE, *otherwiſe* KENNEDY; *are you* GUILTY "*of this* FELONY *of which you ſtand indicted, or not* "GUILTY?" Any anſwer to ſuch a queſtion, put to ſuch a gentleman, would have been a derogation of character: nay, ſo truly pitiable was his ſituation, that it——moved the court; for, as Ariſtophanes ſays, in his Devil upon Two Sticks—"Up ſtarted "little Belzy in the form of an able practitioner," and ſaid—

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He humbly conceived that his client could not anſwer the queſtion; and by a delicate turn relieved the Major from the moſt poignant diſtreſs. This *delicate turn* was, A FLAW in the Indictment. This he prefaced with an obſervation, That it was his own wiſh, it was the wiſh of his client, to meet the indictment upon the merits; and not to avail themſelves of any legal inaccuracies. But from the complexion of this proſecution, or rather perſecution, he thought it his duty to lay hold of every opportunity which could operate to Mr. Semple's advantage, (his counſel in this introductory addreſs dropt the title of Major) and therefore he took an exception to the indictment. This objection, he ſaid, was founded upon ſtat. 1. Hen. 5th, c. 5, which enacts, that in all Indictments, the party indicted ſhould be deſcribed in the Indictment, with proper additions; and he cited Hales P. Crown, B. ii. ch. 25, ſec. 70.

He alſo argued, that this being an indictment for felony, it is a fatal fault to apply the addition to the name which comes under the *alias dictus* only, and not to the firſt name, though it is not material whether any addition be put to the name which comes under the *alias dictus* or not, becauſe what is ſo expreſſed is not material; but it is ſo great an error to omit an addition to his firſt name, that where ſeveral are indicted, ſuch an omiſſion, in reſpect to one of them, vitiates the Indictment

as

as to all: 1 Bulſtrode 183, 2 Leonard 183, Cro. Eliz. 583, Dyer 88.

He relied ſtrongly on Hooper's caſe, 2 Leon. 183; and cited ſeveral other authorities.

The judge, Mr. Recorder, obſerved, that the modern practice was uniformly contrary to the caſes cited, but allowed the legality of the objection.

His counſel contended, that allowing the practice to be ſo, the Court ought to over-rule it, on its being ſhewn to be contrary to law.

Mr. Recorder admitted the practice to be againſt the objection; but thought the proper mode of objection would have been by plea in abatement or demurrer.

His counſel again contended, that where there was a wrong addition, the proper mode of taking advantage of it was by plea in abatement, where there was no addition, or the objection appeared upon the face of the Indictment, and in the preſent caſe, the addition being to the *alias dictus* only, therefore no addition, the proper mode of objecting was by exception.

He further contended, that if a word of ſubſtance be omitted in the Indictment, the whole Indictment is bad; but it is otherwiſe where a word of form is omitted, or there is an omiſſion of an anonymous word when the ſenſe is the ſame. 2 Hawk. 246.

The

The King *v.* Wheelhouſe, *Popham* 208. An Indictment for frequenting a bawdy-houſe, and Serjeant Crawley moved to quaſh it as Inſufficient; and among many other objections ſaid, the Indictment ſtated that the defendant was *notivagus*, and it did not ſay that he was a ſuſpicious night-walker. But Dodridge and Whitlock J. over-ruled this objection, and the defendant received judgment. Hilary, 2 Car. King's Bench; and it was determined in Willow's caſe, *Latch* 173.

Under all theſe conſiderations he moved the court to quaſh the indictment.

The Recorder thought the objection was well founded, and ordered that the indictment ſhould be quaſhed accordingly.

In plain Engliſh, and to make this recital intelligible to men of common ſenſe, as well as to lawyers, let it be underſtood, that the priſoner, (we beg the Major's pardon) was indicted thus:

The jurors for our Lord the King, on their oath preſent, That JAMES GEORGE HARROLD, *otherwiſe* SEMPLE, *otherwiſe* KENNEDY, &c. &c. &c. whereas in truth and in fact it ought to have ran thus:

The jurors for our Lord the King, on their oath preſent, That JAMES GEORGE SEMPLE, *otherwiſe* HARROLD, *otherwiſe* KENNEDY, &c. &c. &c. becauſe his real name being SEMPLE, that name ought to have *taken the lead*, and the Alias's, like ſo many other horſes

horſes that have ſtarted for the *King's plate*, been whipped in for the ſweepſtakes only.

But his counſel having been ſucceſsful in this motion, made another, which unfortunately failed. The indictment having, by order of court, been quaſhed, he moved that Mr. Semple be DISCHARGED. The Recorder, however, demurred to this motion, by ſaying, That on diſcuſſing the *form* of an indictment, the court never go into the *merits*; that as a grand jury had thought proper to ſay the priſoner had been guilty of felony, it would be a breach of duty in the court to ſuffer him to go at large till that queſtion was tried.

He therefore ordered Major Semple to be taken thence to the place from whence he came, and to be detained in his Majeſty jail of Newgate till the next ſeſſions, when the profecutor might have an opportunity of preferring a freſh bill, and then alter the form of the indictment.

It was *hinted* beſides, that there were ſeveral other indictments againſt him for *frauds*, which were of themſelves ſtrong enough to detain him.

The counſel then obſerved that he ſhould adviſe his client to plead and take his trial; but after ſome conſideration, that intention was dropped, and the Major taken from the bar, bowing three times as he retired.

We ought here to obſerve, that we cannot poſſibly mean any the moſt diſtant reflection on the gentleman

gleman who was Major Semple's counſel, Mr. Agar, by adopting the term "*Little Belzy.*" It would hurt us, not a little, ſhould he ſo conceive it. We know his liberality of ſentiment, and that he will readily pardon a little of the Old Bailey wit. Indeed, to do him juſtice, he diſtinguiſhed himſelf much to his credit, and with a modeſty that diſcovered as much the characteriſtics of a gentleman, as with a learning that diſplayed his abilities as a lawyer. We know his manners in private life to be amiable; and we have no doubt, by application, he will very ſoon be an equal ornament to his profeſſion as he is already to ſociety.

Diſappointed, therefore, in concluding the life of Major Semple with his trial *now*; the receſs has afforded us an opportunity of making the delay agreeable, by treating our readers in the mean time with a few more anecdotes.

From the circumſtance of Baron Hompeſch having introduced him to Mr. Chancellor Pitt, Mr. Semple ſtruck out a line of ingenuity which ſeldom or never failed of ſucceſs. He took the freedom, as one gentleman might readily do with another, of writing to Mr. Pitt; and in one of theſe letters hinted a ſcheme which, he ſaid, would be ſerviceable to the kingdom, deſiring to know when Mr. Pitt would do him the honour of an audience.

Having obtained anſwers, which was all that Mr. Semple thought neceſſary for the good of his country, he took that natural advantage of it,

which leſs ambitious minds might be excuſed for. He boaſted of his acquaintance and intimacy with Mr. Pitt, readily ſhewed his letters, and alſo letters from Dr. Prettyman, and made himſelf of that conſequence which he knew the weaker part of the world readily bowed down to.

The firſt inſtance we have on record of his making uſe of his correſpondence, is on the 19th of December, in the year 1785, at Doncaſter in Yorkſhire.—We have not learnt the particulars how he got there, whether it was in a journey to Scotland or from it; nor how he introduced himſelf to the gentleman who gave credit to that correſpondence: but the fact is, he did introduce himſelf, and the introduction anſwered his then purpoſe. The ingenious tale too, which he fabricated to complete his purpoſe, we are alſo ſtrangers to; but the following letter, which a very fortunate accident put into our poſſeſſion, exhibits ſo very pleaſing and humorous a picture, and is alſo accompanied with ſuch a ſarcaſtic turn, that we inſert it *litera ſcriptis*, as the beſt explanation of our gentleman's addreſs.

SIR, *Doncaſter July 20th 1786*
Yorkſhire

IT was my intention in April laſt to have done myſelf the Honor of paying my reſpects to you or to have attempted it at W B Blands Eſq^r N° 24 queen Anns ſtreet Weſt London—But truly as you ſay by your addreſs

dress to the publick in the Morning Chronicle of 17th dated 15 instant Various Accts then circulating—made me defer adding trouble to my so readily being duped by you the 19th Dec 1785—For 7½ Guineas

"*You confess there are people who may with reason complain, of you,* And do add "*I declare I will do my endeavor to settle as soon as possible all the demands against me.*" Wou'd it was known to this House *Ellison Cooke & Co* when to expect it. Can you remember all that pass'd—And where the James Semple poisoned himself! who I mention'd to you had Swindled me in 1777—Its a long time since—Forgive me if I trouble you with some more particulars of this Last matter *James Semple* (so like your writing I've no doubt the very same person as wrote J G Semple) "York 24 Oct. 1777 pay *Mr Tho*s *Swan* 5 Gns address'd to Mr. Veach Mert Broad Street Golden Square London" When this made its way to Town the Acct was Mr Swann was Swindled—Don't you think such Villains deserve Hanging Mr Semple? May all such only meet their deserts—And *some Folks* might not have had the trouble to live so long—as ever to experience any disagreeable trial to pay debts—so long dishonorably contracted—Judge you by the enclos'd—And at least if not for both or *all three Se i* mples! not forgetting your very serious promise *Words* in dec' Last do something worthy yourself. and my advertising you in the Morning Chronicle, or any paper you chuse——That you have discharged the 5 & 7 Guineas & ½ at our Bankers Messrs R & F Gosling you may remember you took their names down in december Last—You may depend upon my doing every generous act towards you in return—But as I greatly fear the pleasing side—for myself—Will not do that to myself—I truly wish every VILLAIN had administer'd to him—Twelve Guineas

& ℔ payment wou'd be more agreeable to receive than to join in the proſecuting the once ſo Intimate Friend of our GREAT Mr Pit & his ſecretary Mr Smith —— But wch I ſhall have a pleaſure in doing—If your Friends want help who have got you into ſuch obligations as you expreſs to the Lord Mayor and City Marſhall.

My name already you have herein.

It appears, by the foregoing letter, that a Mr. Semple had paid his reſpects to the gentleman nine years ago; and, by the preſent Mr. Semple's account, had poiſoned himſelf. What the gentleman's opinion was of the two Soſia's may be eaſily gueſſed by his interrogation, *Don't you think ſuch villains deſerve hanging, Mr. Semple?*

It muſt be alſo obſerved, that although the gentleman gave himſelf the trouble of addreſſing Mr. Semple on the ſubject, which is eaſily ſeen was ſince his unlucky confinement, ſuch addreſs was not the reſult of any the moſt diſtant idea of being refunded the foregoing ſum, but from the pleaſing ſatisfaction of reminding Mr. Semple that the matter was not totally forgot, and that he was not entirely a ſtranger to his preſent place of abode.

Indeed, the gentleman's good wiſhes towards Mr. Semple are by no means ſo favourable as his calamitous circumſtances may require, as he promiſes him, if his friends want help, he ſhall have a pleaſure in aſſiſting them.

We have hitherto traced Mr. Semple's abilities

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in preying upon the purſes of his friends; but that qualification was infinitely inferior to his merit in preying upon the peace of mind and happineſs of two gentlemen, who had the honour of his acquaintance.

It has been noticed already that he made his application to Baron Hompeſch on the ground of having fought two duels himſelf, and killed both his men; but he was more fortunate in the following event.

When he was at Spa, there happened to be a quarrel between two real gentlemen, with whom Mr. Semple aſſociated, and he was the go-between in the diſpute. To each party, though he undertook the office of a mediator, he aggravated the expreſſions of the one, and thereby inflamed the mind of the other. This diverſion of Mr. Semple's produced a duel; and the conſequence was, that one of his friends was wounded: but when a reconciliation and explanation enſued, Mr. Semple thought proper, in order to avoid manual chaſtiſement, to abdicate the place.

Mr. Semple was alſo in November 1785, at Manchester, and had introduced himſelf to ſeveral gentlemen as the confidential and boſom friend of Mr. Pitt, Dr. Prettyman, Mr. Roſe, Mr. Lepine, and others who have the management of the various departments of his Majeſty's treaſury. By producing of ſome letters, which he had artfully obtained from

ſome

ſome of thoſe gentlemen, he had made himſelf a man of no ſmall conſequence in that country. But his application to Thomas Butterworth Bayley, Eſq. of the Hope, near Manchester, who is in the commiſſion of the peace for that county, likewiſe a gentleman of independent fortune, and, what is ſtill far ſuperior, a moſt reſpectable character, was founded on another claim.

Mr. Semple introduced himſelf to that gentleman as a relation of the noble family of Lord Semple, of Scotland, with whom he knew Mr. Bayley and his father had been acquainted, and even connected; and, to induce him to believe he was the perſon he repreſented himſelf, he exhibited treaſury letters from different perſons in that department; his plea of wanting money was, that having been a long journey on a matrimonial excurſion with a young lady of great fortune from the weſt of England to Dover, and from thence to Gretna-Green, in Scotland, his caſh was expended. The ſum Mr. Bayley lent him was fifteen guineas (not twenty-five pounds, as related in the former editions) for which he gave excellent ſecurity, his note. Mr. Bayley conſidering this as a fraud, wrote to Sir Sampſon Wright on the ſubject, who was very active in his endeavours to have him apprehended.

We

We hardly need ſay, that the note was never redeemed; but when Mr. Semple had the honour of being conducted to the domicil of our ſovereign lord the king, and to cut ſo conſpicuous a figure in our public prints, Mr. Bayley by that means diſcovering the Major's abode, indorſed the note over to Sir Sampſon, who has been ſo unkind as to lodge a detainer againſt Mr. Semple in the ſhape and form of an uncivil action.

Now, though the foregoing ſum of money, thus borrowed of Mr. Bayley, was obtained in a manner that moſt aſſuredly comes under the 30th of Geo. 2, and is clearly and unequivocally a fraud, if the pretence made uſe of by Mr. Semple could be proved falſe; yet the *onus probandi* being thrown by law on Mr. Bayley, it would be next to impoſſible for him to prove that the Major had not left his pocket-book behind him, that he had not expended all his caſh, and that he was not going on a matrimonial expedition to Scotland to be united to a lady of large fortune.

Mr. Bayley, therefore, not being able to prove the *negative*, it was out of his power to put the Major to the trouble of proving the *affirmative*; (two words, by the bye, on which are founded every legal purſuit, and every ſpecies of art and chicanery in the proſecution of it) he took the only remedy he had to try to recover his property; and no doubt very reluctantly, for we have every rea-

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ſon to think, that had Mr. Bayley had it in his power to have proceeded otherwiſe, he would gladly have relinquiſhed the proſecution in the ſhape of a *debt*, and done juſtice to his country by adopting a proſecution for a *fraud*.

We are in poſſeſſion alſo of another, but a ſtill more ingenious, adventure of his, in an excurſion from the north to town. He came to an inn on the road in a poſt-chaiſe; and it being about two o'clock, P. M. he ſaid it was too ſoon for dinner, but whilſt the landlord was roaſting a fowl, he would amuſe himſelf by viewing the church, &c.

The fowl was accordingly ſpitted; but it happening that the boy who drove Mr. Semple to the above inn, had a ſweetheart in the ſame place, he left his horſes to the care of the hoſtler, whilſt he went to pay his reſpects to his Dulcinea, at the farther end of the town.

As the driver was ſtanding at the door talking with the lady, he ſaw a poſt-chaiſe coming along; and having the curioſity to ſee who was therein, was very much ſurpriſed to find the gentleman he had juſt ſat down at one inn, in a poſt-chaiſe belonging to another. But what appeared ſtill more ſurprizing was, he had not received his maſter's fare; and, what was ſtill worſe, his own cuſtomary compliment. It was in vain for the Major to draw back and ſecrete himſelf. The boy ran back to the inn, and told the circumſtance, when the maſter ordered two horſes to be ſaddled; and, at the end of

two

two ſtages, the landlord and boy accoſted Mr. Semple very rudely indeed, and inſiſted on his going before a magiſtrate.

When they arrived at his worſhip's, the complaint was formally laid; and the Major being aſked what he had to ſay for himſelf, he ran through his lineage and hiſtory, even from the year 1547, when the title of Lord Viſcount Liſle became extinct, to the very hour in which he was bade to to tell it; leaving out all the hair-breadth eſcapes, diſaſters, chances, &c.

Having done this, with his uſual audacity and with equal hauteur he harangued on his importance to government. He declared himſelf the boſom friend of Mr. Pitt; ſaid he was on his Majeſty's ſervice with expreſſes of the moſt important and ſerious nature to this kingdom; that he had exhauſted all his caſh; that he would compel every innkeeper on the road to furniſh him with horſes and chaiſe; and dared the magiſtrate or landlord to moleſt or detain him.

The authoritative ſtile and manner in which he delivered himſelf, and the production of his *corps de reſerve*, Mr. Pitt's letters, produced an effect, that not only anſwered his utmoſt purpoſe, but produced more, much more, than Mr. Semple expected.

The magiſtrate, whoſe good wiſhes towards government greatly inclined him to favour every thing that had the leaſt ſmack of it, was determined not to put a ſpoke into the wheels of it. He took

Mr. Semple, therefore, into his private room, and not only told him he would pay the chaiſe, but actually offered him a ſufficient ſum of money to enable him to come to town; which offer the Major accepted, with a profuſion of acknowledgments, and purſued his journey. And thus ended an exploit, which we diſmiſs without a comment. One fact we muſt take notice of: the landlord was by far better off than the juſtice; he was not only paid for his chaiſe, but the fowl, and even for the two poſt-horſes which were uſed in the purſuit; whilſt the other never knew where or how to recover a ſhilling. The poſtboy, however, with a crown in one hand, and his hat in the other, with a very low bow heartily wiſhed his honor a good journey to London.

A circumſtance which happened during the courſe of Mr. Semple's lucubrations, between his ſervant and the lady to whom Mr. S. thought proper, *pro tempore*, to lend that name, may not be altogether unentertaining; at leaſt it will vary the ſcene, and afford a relaxation from that continual ſtring on which we have already for a conſiderable time ſo very loudly thrummed.

In page 41, we mentioned his being at Mr. Careleſs's, White Hart, Watford. It was there that the gentlewoman who made uſe of the name of Semple, and every other name which the gentleman of that name had occaſionally complimented her with, was detected in an amour with her own

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ſerving man, John Winter, by no leſs a perſonage than the Major himſelf. The conſequence was a mutual diſcharge of manual compliments and ſervices. The lady knelt for forgiveneſs, and the Major's tenderneſs granted it.

But this was not all that attended Mr. Semple there; his unlucky ſtars diſtreſſed him ſtill further. His bag and baggage were detained by Mr. Careleſs, and conveyed into the hands of Sir Sampſon Wright: letters from Mr. Pitt, &c. &c. were diſcovered, with a pile of others, that made Oſſa like a wart. They have been tranſmitted into the hands of Lord Sydney, the ſecretary of ſtate, and we are afraid, for ever irretrievable; unleſs it ſhould be thought proper, in mercy to mankind, to ſuffer a hiſtory to be publiſhed, which would aſtoniſh the world.

When we make uſe of ſo large an expreſſion as the world, we do not mean to confine ourſelves to a circumference of three miles, as Goldſmith's midwife did, who had never been farther in her life, had lain all the farmer's wives in that circle, and boaſted of her knowledge of the world; nor do we mean a circle of a little larger magnitude, viz. that of Great Britain and our town of Berwick-upon-Tweed; but we mean an extent ſtill more ſpacious, which the following letter will beſt explain.

SPA, July 4, 1786.

SIR,

ON my return to this place from Pruſſia, I ſhould think myſelf negligent did I not convey my reſpects to you by the earlieſt intelligence, and to acquaint you that I ſuffered much in my health, which I thank God is now much improved, no thanks to the party that occaſioned it. I have been at Bonn on the Rhine; and if the infamous S—— is ever ſeen there again, he is a priſoner for life, as he is more notorious in that place than in London, and THROUGHOUT THE CONTINENT. Mr. Heathcote has detained the carriage, and put his arms on it, and the banker has got both his cloaths and mine.

When at Bonn, Lambert's father and mother were unhappy beyond expreſſion relative to the boy. If you could give me the leaſt hint of him to ſatisfy the parents, you would do them a ſingular piece of charity.

I am, Sir,

Your moſt devoted humble ſervant,

JOHN WINTER.

The reader will excuſe us putting the addreſs as we have not the conſent of the gentleman ſo to do.

Mr. Heathcote, the gentleman mentioned in the above letter, is in ſome miniſterial capacity from the Engliſh court; and, according to the cuſtom of the country, ſeized the carriage, for the uſe of thoſe to whom it more properly belonged.

At Hamburgh, he contrived to get himſelf introduced to Mr. Matthias, the envoy; and by the means of that introduction to recommend himſelf to Mr. Matthias, in Scotland-yard, treaſurer to her Majeſty. Mr. J. G. Semple accompanied Mr. Matthias one evening to Covent-Garden houſe; and under pretence of having changed his breeches, and left his purſe behind him, he obtained five guineas of Mr. Matthias.

It would not have been extraordinary had this matter reſted ſingly; but on ſome other pretence he obtained an equal ſum of the ſame gentleman.

Being at Egham, he contrived to make himſelf acquainted with Dr. Ogilvie, a very worthy divine of that place; and having ſo done, and found by that means the tradeſmen and others with whom the doctor dealt, Mr. Semple obtained credit of various people, Having alſo been ſeen arm in arm with the doctor at Windſor, wherever the latter went into a ſhop the Major went afterwards, and got goods of ſome and caſh of others.

Of

Of Mr. Gulliver, of the Duke's-Head, Belſont, near Hounſlow, he obtained the ſum of 10l. and gave Mr. Gulliver the ſame valuable ſecurity for it, as he had before given to Mr. Bailey, of Hope. But, in order to convince the reader that there could be no external appearance of poverty, we muſt tell him, that the Major cut a daſh at Belſont; for he had ſervants in livery, and a carriage which he called his own: but he never thought proper to put up at the Duke's-Head after the above affront beſtowed on him by Mr. Gulliver, when Mr. Semple uſurped the name of Major Cunningham.

But his ingenuity was not ſo circumſcribed as to be limited to feaſts upon gentlemen who do not know the world: the gentlemen of the law, who are ſuppoſed to know moſt of it, experienced his addreſs in the art of extracting gold out of the purſe.

Mr. Gapper, of the Temple, accommodated him with forty pounds; and Mr. Parker, of Halifax, with fifty.

He was not, however, quite ſo ſucceſsful with Mr. Bell, bookſeller, of the Strand: under pretence of being employed by the miniſtry, he applied for a conſiderable ſum of money, for conveying intelligence for the uſe of the Morning Poſt; adding, he was going on an embaſſy with diſpatches to Germany, intruſted to him by Lord Shelburne, which contained a ſecret negociation with the Emperor.

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In this inſtance he was not quite a match for Mr. Bell; but in a few days after, when that gentleman was out, he called at the ſhop, and borrowed half a guinea, pretending he was arreſted. The Major's honour ſtill ſtands unredeemed at Mr. Bell's. It turned out, however, that Mr. Semple advanced the truth; for he was then actually in the cuſtody of Mr. Charles Hyndes, officer to the ſheriff of Middleſex.

Mr. Vincent, of Speenham-land, Newbury, Berks, has alſo authorized us to inſert the following application of Major Semple to that gentleman.

The Major arrived at Newbury about the month of March laſt, in a travelling chariot, and two ladies with him, and put up at the Pelican. There, alſo, he pretended that he had been ſo unlucky as to leave his pocket-book behind him at London, and that his caſh being expended, he was diſabled either to proſecute his journey to Bath, or return to town.

He enquired of the maſter of the inn whether there were not ſome of the military quartered there, and on his being informed that the Oxford Blues lay at Newbury, Mr. Semple made his pretended diſtreſs known to an officer or two of that corps, who declined to accommodate him, having, perhaps, travelled as far north as the Major.

On this he enquired for an army agent, but none being there, he aſked for ſome gentleman of character and reſpect, to whom he could make his

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ſituation known. The waiter conducted him to Mr. Vincent's, who generouſly lent him five guineas, for which the Major gave his obligation, and took his leave with a profuſion of grateful acknowledgments.

On his return, which was in a few days, inſtead of calling and diſcharging ſo honourable a debt, he gave himſelf the trouble of ſending a note, with an apology, to Mr. Vincent, but took care to diſpatch it juſt on the eve of his departure from Newbury, ſo that Mr. Vincent ſhould not be under the neceſſity of troubling the Major with his perſonal appearance at the Pelican.

One little incident happened when the Major made his entré to Mr. Vincent, that may not be thought unworthy notice. On his mentioning his name, Mrs. Vincent aſked him, 'Simple, did you 'ſay, Sir?' 'No, Madam,' replied he, 'not 'Simple, at your ſervice, but Semple, a relation 'of Lord Semple's, and a Major in the Ruſſian 'ſervice.' On his departure Mrs. Vincent obſerved, that her huſband perhaps might be *Simple*, but ſhe was ſure the fellow was no *Major*; which juſtifies a former obſervation, that the fair ſex ſee into a ſharper with much keener eyes than that philoſophical animal called man.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

THE partiality which a candid and diſcerning public ever beſtows on induſtrious merit, has enabled us, by way of APPENDIX, to add a few more anecdotes to that very numerous collection we have already compiled.

In return for ſo ſingular a mark of its approbation, we ſhall labour to preſerve their countenance and protection; on the one hand, expreſſing our gratitude, on the other, rejoicing in a defeat of thoſe drones of literature, who perpetually prey on the honey collected with labour, and manufactured with the care and induſtry of others. To the proof.

In the month of June laſt Mr. Semple made his appearance at that faſhionable place of reſort, the Wells of Buxton, in the neighbourhood of the Peak of Derby.

He came there in a ſtile that pourtrayed a perſon of faſhion. He had his Valet de Chambre, his *own* carriage, i. e. ſpeaking more properly, the

carriage of Mr. Lycett, with two poſtillions, to whom he threw a crown each, and beſpoke a ſuite of apartments.

The arrival of this ſplendid ſtranger, who aſſumed all the airs and graces of a man of quality, ſtruck a panic in the minds of the ſquires of the Peak. Gentlemen of faſhion were ſmit with envy, and the boſoms of the ſofter ſex palpitated with the hope of making a conqueſt of a man of ſuch figure and apparent fortune.

To increaſe his conſequence, he ſtiled himſelf the heir apparent of the dormant title of Lyſle; and, in order to lay the foundation for the completion of his purpoſe, in his journey to Buxton, Mr. Semple gave a ball to the ladies. We muſt obſerve here, however, that it was part of Mr. Biſhop's caſh (vide page 53,) which enabled him to ſhine ſo conſpicuouſly at this bread-and-butter manufactory.

There was not a gentleman that did not court Mr. Semple's company, nor a lady that did not prick up her ears at the ſound of his name. He was accommodated with hunters, his own having, as he ſaid, been left at Loughborough.

This conſequence laſted about a week, when a ruſtic clergyman, who had more blunt honeſty about him than moſt of the refined gentlemen there, began to ſuſpect the Major.——We call him Major, becauſe it was the title he there aſſumed, with the

Order

Order of Merit at his button-hole, which her Imperial Majeſty of All the Ruſſias had, he boaſted, conferred on him for ſervices done her.——

This clergyman, who, if any little tale of ſcandal chanced to reach his ears, was ſure to propagate it, in order, as we ſuppoſe, to make mankind aſhamed of their vices, was paid as much reſpect to out of the pulpit as, perhaps, he was in it, i. e. the place was too polite to give credit to a ſingle ſyllable he ſaid.

He chanced to have a very fine hunter or two, which Major Semple wiſhed to purchaſe; but, as the latter did not haggle about the price, and offered to give his drafts on his London Banker, the clergyman, in the warmth of zeal for morality, thought proper to whiſper to every perſon at Buxton that the Major was, ad rem, to all intents and purpoſes, a ſwindler.

Had a notorious gambler but hinted half as much, there would not have been a moment's heſitation about the truth of it; but, as it was a clergyman that ſet the rumour abroad, it was debated whether he ſhould not be ſent to Coventry for a ſcandal-monger, and for picking holes in every man's cloth but his own.——

It happened, however, one morning, that he drew ten guineas out of a gentleman's purſe, when they were out on a ride, pretending he had

accidentally left his purſe at the inn, on the table; but he never afterwards took any notice about refunding it.—This little incident, coupled with the clergyman's account, made a complete ſtory, ſo that when the Major made his next appearance, there were many long faces and ſhy looks.

Mr. Semple was quick enough of comprehenſion to diſcern it.—He accoſted the ladies, and drank tea with them, with all the effrontery and nonchalance of firſt-rate impudence. His prudence was as great as his comprehenſion. He ordered horſes to be put to the carriage, and carried his ſword in his hand about the room for upwards of four hours, before he departed.

To wind up this excurſion, we muſt inform our readers, that Lord Suffield, (late Sir Harbord Harbord) was then at Buxton. To that gentleman he pretended, that he had travelled with young Mr. Harbord in many places on the continent; but owned it was rather a delicate point to mention, that he had accommodated him in the route with a trifle of money, and deſired Sir Harbord would acquaint him whether he ſhould preſent the ſmall account then, or wait the young gentleman's return.—On Sir Harbord's deſiring to know the ſum, and expreſſing his obligations to him for having ſupplied his ſon with caſh abroad, Major Semple ſat down, and ſoon produced a regular

account

account from ſtage to ſtage, amounting in the whole to thirty-ſix guineas, which Sir Harbord paid him immediately.

It was the next day but one that the Major decamped from Buxton.—What further ſums he obtained has not yet come to our knowledge; many had obliged the Major, who are too much of gentlemen to deſtroy the obligation by divulging it.

It ought not to be forgot, for the Major's credit, that he threw a guinea to each of the waiters, and one to the tea-woman, thereby leaving Buxton with ſome eclat.

The following little town anecdote ſerves to illuſtrate his character, and the fruitfulneſs of his genius ſtill further.

On the 26th of April laſt, happening to be paſſing through Berners-ſtreet, he obſerved Lady M'C—y coming out of Mr. Bowyer's, the miniature painter, and go into her carriage.—In about half an hour afterwards he did Mr. Bowyer the favor to call and ſee his pictures; at the ſame time obſerving that Lady M'C—y, whom he knew was getting her picture done, (and who was, as he ſaid, one of his moſt intimate acquaintances,) had been kind enough to recommend him to Mr. B. to have his picture painted.—He then fixed to take the firſt ſitting the next day at eleven.—But upon getting into the hackney-

hackney-coach, which was waiting for him at the door, he fortunately recollected he had only a 10*l.* note in his pocket, and flew back to Mr. Bowyer to acquaint him with it, and requeſt the favor of four or five ſhillings to pay for his coach, which he meant preſently to diſcharge.— Mr. Bowyer complied with his requeſt, and upon Lady M'C—y's coming to ſit to Mr. Bowyer the next day, he thanked her ladyſhip kindly for her recommendation of Col. George; but her ladyſhip could not for the ſoul of her recollect the Colonel, or ever hearing of his name before, who, in the midſt of his great hurry of buſineſs, and very numerous engagements, forgot to take the ſitting according to appointment; and Mr. Bowyer has ſince thought himſelf extremely happy the Colonel did not aſk for a much larger ſum.

At Norwich we have the following very ſingular circumſtance, in which he was aſſiſted by the perſon who appeared there as the Major's Lady.—

Among others with whom he ingratiated himſelf was Dr. M'Quin, at whoſe houſe the Major and his lady lodged, by invitation, (as the noiſe of the inn was offenſive to madam) in nearly the ſame ſtile and faſhion he had before done at Buxton.— And ſuch was his diſſipation, that though he was daily reduced to the ſhifts of robbing, to ſupport it, yet no ſooner was he in poſſeſſion of a ſmall

ſum,

ſum, than he was as induſtrious to ſquander it, and rely on his invention for further ſupplies.

He had borrowed five guineas of the Doctor, and had diſſipated it in a ball, by which he had incurred the Doctor's diſpleaſure, he being a gentleman who knew the value of money too well, to throw it away in a manner ſo totally vague and empty, and without conferring any one good to ſociety by it.—

In a ſhort time after he applied again to the Doctor for the ſum of fifteen guineas, and then offered his draft on his agent in town. To this application Dr. M'Quin was very averſe, took the liberty of rallying the Major on the lightneſs of his conduct, and expatiated on the ill effects it muſt naturally produce. To this expoſtulation Major Semple pleaded the appendages of a gentleman's life, and argued how neceſſary thoſe little ſuperfluities were to ſupport the character which birth, education, and cuſtom claimed, as rights hereditary.

In this argument it was that the lady gave an inſtance of her ingenuity, which by no means diſparaged her paramour's choice; for, on the Doctor's declining to lend the fifteen guineas, the ſhock her nerves ſuſtained was ſo great as to quite overcome that delicacy of feeling which generous and liberal minds muſt feel at a pecuniary repulſe. In ſhort, ſhe ſwooned, or rather ſeemed to ſwoon away, when her ſituation apparently required all

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the little offices of hartſhorn, water, &c. &c. and made the Doctor and his lady feel as much real concern as if the fit had been real.

When Mrs. Semple was able to open her eyes, and glance them towards her dear Major, ſhe by degrees opened her mouth, and gently chid him for the application; and giving him her keys, deſired he would go up ſtairs and take three diamond pins to diſpoſe of, which would produce five times the ſum required, and might be eaſily replaced in London.

The ſituation of the lady, her apparent diſtreſs of mind, the agitations that the Major was in on her account, and her ſo readily offering to diſpoſe of her diamonds for the Major's uſe, made ſuch an impreſſion on the Doctor, that he relaxed from his firſt reſolution, and inſtantly fetched the money, which he now intreated the Major's acceptance of, and which, with many apologies, the latter agreed to.

Strange as this may ſeem, it will turn out a little ſtranger ſtill: the reader may recollect a circumſtance that happened at Mr. Careleſs's, at Watford, with the above lady and her ſervant.—The ſcene was renewed at Dr. M'Quin's, the lady being obſerved to come out of the Footman's room in her ſhift: as ſoon as the Doctor was apprized of it, he diſcharged the groupe, without the ſatisfaction of being paid either the twenty guineas

or

or the lodging, happy, no doubt, to get rid of gueſts who were a diſgrace to the roof that afforded them a ſhelter, and a plague to every perſon with whom they were acquainted.

Dr. M'Quin, however, was not the only ſufferer at Norwich.—Mr. Pye, a taylor, was one of thoſe unfortunate tradeſmen who gave credit to appearances, and of whom Mr. Semple has, for a conſiderable number of years, made a conſtant prey.—Indeed, without a taylor no man can appear like a gentleman: the equipments of the head and heart may have ſome trifling conſideration with a few unfaſhionable fellows, but a knave in embroidery has always the countenance and ſupport of the *beau monde*. The advantages he derived from his lodging at Dr. M'Quin's, he took care to purſue with the eagerneſs of a thorough-bred gameſter. Having made uſe of the uſual artifice of drawing a letter from the Doctor, and having alſo made his way to Colonel Debbeig, who was a particular friend of Dr. M'Quin's, by producing that letter, and urging his intimacy, he obtained five guineas from the Colonel.

The Major aſſumed alſo his uſual modeſty on the occaſion, by ſoliciting ſoon after the ſum of five more; but which were poſitively refuſed him, through the circumſpective eye of the Colonel's lady, who ſaw a little more into the Major than the Colonel; and by her advice it was that her

huſband was a ſufferer for the ſum of five guineas only.—

By a ſimilar pretence he got ſix guineas of Captain Seaton, at Thirſk, in Yorkſhire; but with Dr. Aiken, of Yarmouth, he was a little more ſucceſsful, for that gentleman generouſly offered, and the Major as readily accepted, the ſum of twenty pounds.

An innkeeper at the laſt mentioned place, whoſe name we have not yet learnt, was ſtill a greater ſufferer than Dr. Aiken, for at that inn he borrowed twenty-five pounds, which, like the reſt of the Major's borrowings, ſtill remains unpaid.

Of Mr. De Roman, hatter to the Duke de Orleans, in St. James's-ſtreet, he obtained a fine riding-hat and feather for his lady, and a *chapeau à la Ruſſe* for himſelf; pretending he was in the Empreſs's ſervice.—At this period the Major lived in Bond-ſtreet.—Though the reader muſt, by this time, be tolerably well convinced, that Mr. Semple's aſſurance did not ſtick at trifles, yet he can ſcarcely imagine that he had effrontery ſufficient to conduct himſelf to the table of the Marquis of Lanſdown, then Lord Shelburne.—This, however, is the fact; he not only dined, but was intruſted with diſpatches, to carry abroad, by the Marquis.

We are ſtill ſtrangers to the means by which he introduced himſelf, but we have it from unqueſtionable authority, that he referred the Marquis to a gentleman of the Temple for his character; for the

the character of which gentleman the Marquis was referred to the Maſter of the Rolls, whoſe *report* was to the following effect: "*That if Major Semple was a friend of Mr. G——d's, there could be no difficulty made about employing him.*"

It was in conſequence of this enquiry and report that Mr. Semple was intruſted with diſpatches to Vienna; which he ſhamefully neglected; they lay at Mr. G——d's a conſiderable time, and were afterwards removed to Mr. Careleſs's at Watford; from whence, with two others, they were tranſmitted to Sir Sampſon Wright, who, as before mentioned, delivered them to the Secretary of State.

The adage is old, but not leſs true, "that great "wits have ſhort memories:"—That Mr. Semple lived by his wits, few will be bold enough to deny; and that a man who can, for a number of years, live daily by them, muſt be a great wit, there are very few but will allow. Having, by this kind of reaſoning, eſtabliſhed the *Major*, we come to prove the concluſion, his ſhort memory.

It was at one of the foregoing hours of intercourſe, viz. at dinner, that Mr. Semple gave a glaring proof of the ſhortneſs of his memory. The ſubject turned on politics, and at laſt came to the late peace, when Mr. Semple, with all that vacuity of thought and abſence of mind, which ſo often diſtinguiſhes great wits, took occaſion to obſerve, "*That it was the moſt damned peace that ever* "*was made.*"

The Marquis's fork, which was on the tip of his lip, with a morſel of chicken on the point of it, was, with hand and arm ſuſpended thereon.—He ſtared at the Major, the Major ſtared at the Marquis, who, in a few ſeconds, ejaculated, "Sir!" to which the other replied, "My lord!"—"I beg "your pardon," ſaid the Marquis, "I thought, "Sir, you called for a glaſs of wine." "Oh, no, my "Lord," replied Mr. Semple, "I ſaid it was the "moſt damned peace that ever was made."—"Then I'll help you to a good one," anſwered the Marquis; and immediately began to load the Major's plate, meaning, no doubt, it was high time for him to ſtop his mouth.

The great art of living *with* the world is, to accommodate our opinions to thoſe of our company;—to fathom their inclinations, their prejudices, their paſſions, and aſſimilate our own thereby, in proportion even to their moral as well as political barometer, elſe we can never meet with the good opinion of our equals, or the countenance of our ſuperiors.—When we ſay this, we mean to regulate our opinion by the natural depravity of mankind.

The fact will ſpeak for itſelf better than a thouſand comments. From that hour Mr. Semple never ſat down to table with the Marquis; and whenever he called on buſineſs was ſure to wait a moſt conſiderable time before his name could even

be

be announced, but much more ſo ere he could gain an audience.

The late Dr. Goldſmith (the good-natured reader will readily pardon the compariſon) made once a ſimilar blunder with the very ſelf-ſame great perſonage.—They both happened to be in the ſtage-box of Covent Garden Theatre one evening, when the Doctor, who was then a ſtranger, was introduced to his Lordſhip. The latter profeſſed himſelf exceedingly happy; was honoured by the Doctor's company, and invited him to ſupper, which was accepted. However, in the courſe of the converſation at the Theatre, his Lordſhip obſerved, that the Public-papers had given him the appellation of Malagrida, but for what reaſon he could not diſcover.—Nor I neither, ſaid the Doctor, for every body knows that Malagrida was a very honeſt man.—

This abrupt and uncourtly wit loſt the Doctor a ſupper, and the honour of his Lordſhip's good opinion, who never ſpoke to him during the remainder of the entertainment, or took notice of him at parting.—

But, anecdote and wit apart, we muſt confeſs that there is ſomething ſo atrociouſly mean and baſe in the character of a SWINDLER, that it were to be wiſhed ſwindling was made a capital offence.—The highwayman ranks very low, indeed, in the ſcale of criminality, when compared to the ſwindler, becauſe he is oftentimes urged by motives which excite

excite our pity and compaſſion, whilſt he hazards his life; but the ſwindler is a wretch, who ignobly exiſts by taking advantages of the generous credulity, and thoſe amiable weakneſſes of human nature which are the ornament of mankind.

In the courſe of the laſt year we trace our gentleman to a lodging at the Leaping-Bar, over Black Friar's Bridge, where he had retired from the noiſe and buſtle which his conſequence had occaſioned at the court end of the town.

It was at this place that his good genius afforded him an opportunity to carry into execution a ſcheme of a more, if we may be allowed the expreſſion, raſcally nature than any he had hitherto practiſed.

The hair-dreſſer waiting on him one morning, Mr. Semple ſeemed angry that the maſter did not attend him; for which neglect the journeyman apologized, by ſaying, his maſter would have come, but he was getting ready for a journey to Scotland.—To Scotland! ſaid Mr. Semple, what part is he going to? To Edinburgh, Sir, replied the journeyman.—And pray what ſort of a man is your maſter, and how does he dreſs?—Oh, Sir, anſwered the frizzeur, he is a very good looking man, and dreſſes quite genteel.——Then tell him, ſaid Semple, that he is exceedingly lucky, for I am going to Edinburgh, and will take him with me in my chaiſe. But what is his name? Ker:, anſwered

anſwered the journeyman.——Then, ſaid Semple, ſend Mr. Kerr to me inſtantly.

The man departed for his maſter, who immediately waited on the Major. Matters were ſoon ſettled, and off they went that very evening—Mr. Kerr rejoicing at the good luck he had met with, and Mr. Semple congratulating himſelf on the good luck he expected to meet.

In this happy diſpoſition of mind they travelled till they came to York, but when there, a little circumſtance occurred, at which Major Semple ſeemed very much hurt. Before dinner, he went out, and in half an hour returned, expreſſing much uneaſineſs at a trick that had been played him in town. He had lent a gentleman, a friend of his, he ſaid, a ſum for which that friend had given him a draught on his banker at York; but when he preſented it, the banker had no caſh of that gentleman's in his hand, and declined honouring the draft.

This, Mr. Semple ſaid, was exceedingly unlucky, as he had relied on that gentleman's bill to carry him forward; but, added he, Mr. Kerr, you perhaps have ſome gold about you. O yes, Sir, anſwered Mr. Kerr, I have fifteen guineas.—Then, ſaid Semple, let me have them, and when we come to Edinburgh I will repay you.

Mr.

Mr. Kerr readily gave Mr. Semple the fifteen guineas, and away they went again; nothing material occurring till they came within half a mile of Edinburgh, when Mr. Semple ſaid, he ſhould walk, as he wanted to call on a nobleman, deſired Mr. Kerr to go to Fortune's Coffee-houſe, and he would be with him in half an hour at fartheſt.

Mr. Kerr went to Fortune's; and to make ſhort of the ſtory, that half hour has never yet arrived.—Happily he had ſome friends in Edinburgh, to whom he related his ſtory, and who ſupplied him with the needful, or he muſt have been left in a ſituation which none can know but thoſe who are aſhamed to borrow, too proud to beg, and too honeſt to ſteal.

With the maſter of Brown's Coffee-houſe, Mitre Court, he played off the following curious device. Having run a bill for a few pounds, and decamped without recollecting that circumſtance, he was ſeen, ſome time after, ſitting in a hackney-coach, near Mitre Court, by a little girl, the daughter of one of the porters of the Temple, to whom Mr. Semple was indebted a few ſhillings.

The child recognizing Mr. Semple, ſhe ran and told her father;—the father ran and told the maſter of the coffee-houſe, and both ran to the coach.—In vain were all Mr. Semple's apologizes and promiſes,

miſes, nothing but prompt payment would do with them; and finding that words would not be ſatisfactory, he deſired them to meet him at the Treaſury, where he ſhould ſee ſome of his friends, either Mr. Pitt, Dr. Prettyman, or Mr. Roſe, whom, the Major ſaid, were greatly in arrear with him, on government account, and then he would ſatisfy the bill and the porter.—

The bait, however, did not take, for they not only refuſed to give him a meeting at the Treaſury, but rudely inſiſted on accompanying him in the coach; and ſtepping in, away they drove to the Treaſury; where, after Mr. Semple had traverſed the rooms, with his companions cloſe at his heels, and found his foregoing friends buſy about other government accounts, and therefore inviſible, as the Major called it, he then propoſed taking them to his relation, Lord Rawdon, in St. James's Place, where he could have any caſh he wanted.

Away they drove to Lord Rawdon's, and ſtopped within a few doors of it. The Major left them in the coach, and went to his Lordſhip's houſe, where he knocked with as much, or more, rapidity than the owner of it would have done, and was inſtantly admitted.

The gentlemen left in the coach, having waited near an hour, and beginning to grow impatient, they went with an humble tap at his Lordſhip's; and, in a quarter of an hour, were anſwered to the following effect:—That a gentleman had come in,

who called himſelf a relation of his Lordſhip's, ſaid he was purſued by Bailiffs, and prayed to be let through the houſe into the Green Park, which had accordingly been done, out of pity to a great man in diſtreſs.

A proper explanation ſoon took place, to the no ſmall diverſion of the family; and though the maſter of the coffee-houſe had three ſhillings and ſixpence coach-hire to pay, he could not refrain from joining in the humour.

We are in poſſeſſion of numerous other tricks of a ſimilar nature, but ſhall conclude with the following ones:

The Major lately lodged in Mitre Court, and on a Sunday evening he went to Meſſrs. Butts and Hand, in Fleet-ſtreet, where he had before laid out a trifle, and thereby was known, and pretended that a friend of his had been arreſted for a tolerable large ſum of money; that ſome gentlemen had contributed to diſcharge the debt, and the whole that was wanting to make up the ſum was thirty-ſix ſhillings; that having nothing but an hundred pound note about him, which was very difficult on ſuch a day to get changed, he requeſted the loan of that ſum till the morrow, when he would return it.

Motives of compaſſion prevailed over prudence. —The Major obtained the money, and *the morrow*, like his *half-hour* with Mr. Kerr, has never yet arrived.

We

We have been favoured alſo with the following anecdotes of Mr. Semple when in Ruſſia. Vide the beginning of this Narrative.

By the recommendation of the Dutcheſs of Kingſton * he came to Peterſburgh, and by her intereſt he obtained the rank of Aid de camp to Prince Potemkin, and with that General went to the Crimea.———On Mrs. Semple's writing to her huſband, complaining of the Dutcheſs of Kingſton's ſlighting her, he returned to Peterſburgh, and by a great deal of bluſter ſo frightened her, that he obliged the Dutcheſs, before he left the houſe, to give him five hundred roubles, (about three and ſix-pence each;) he ſtaid afterwards in Peterſburgh; but before he left the place ſold his carriage to four different Ruſſian noblemen, took the caſh of every one of them, and promiſed to ſend the carriage to each.

His method of getting out of the country was as follows:—He was accuſtomed to walk out at the gate of Narve, on the frontiers of Poland, with a ſervant carrying his great coat, and after his walk to return; but one day his memory failed him, and he never came back. It muſt be obſerved, that no ſtranger can leave the Ruſſian dominions

* Major Semple's diſtreſſes were impreſſed on the mind of the Dutcheſs of Kingſton by her Secretary, Mr. Lilly, in the firſt inſtance; for which ſervice, and many other acts of kindneſs, the Major very gratefully ſwindled Mr. Lilly out of a gold watch, and thirty guineas in money.

without giving notice three times in the public-papers, or obtaining a paſs from the General of the Police, which muſt be counter-ſigned at the Admiralty.

He alſo ſwindled a Ruſſian officer out of a rich regimental ſuit, by the following ſtratagem: He met him at court, and begged he would let his (Semple's) taylor look at the ſuit of clothes, to make ſome like it, in order to bring to England. The credulous officer delivered them to Semple's ſervants, but never ſaw them after.

When he firſt appeared at Saint Peterſburgh he called himſelf at the Engliſh Tavern Lord Semple, and his company was courted by every body.—What is remarkable, he was preſented to the Empreſs in an highland dreſs, and eſteemed by Prince Potemkin as an excellent ſoldier.

Before we diſmiſs the ſubject of his behaviour at Ruſſia, we cannot help obſerving, that with the high recommendation of the Dutcheſs, the favour in which he ſtood with the Empreſs, the eſtimation in which he was held by Prince Potemkin as a ſoldier, and by all perſons of faſhion at Saint Peterſburgh, as a gentleman, it was impoſſible but he muſt have acquired an immenſe fortune, and been diſtinguiſhed with the higheſt military honours, had not a natural propenſity to diſhoneſty ſuperſeded every moral and ſelf-conſideration.

Having ſaid thus much of him, we ſhall conclude our narrative with a ſtroke of his policy after confinement.

When he was removed from the Compter to Newgate, and the turnkey was *dreſſing* the Major with an ornament to his ſilk ſtockings, he begged that a gentleman of his character and importance might not be ſo diſgraced. That he was treated like a gentleman at the former priſon, where he had behaved himſelf like a gentleman alſo, having ſlipped five guineas into the turnkey's hand.

This, however, being a falſehood, and, inſtead of having behaved himſelf like a gentleman, he had left the Compter a few ſhillings in the debt of a poor old waſherwoman, the turnkey of Newgate was deaf to his importunity, and ornamented his leg with a chain of that conſtruction and enormous weight, which we often ſee hanging at the fobs of many of our modern fops.

THE

Trial of James George Semple,

alias Harrold, &c. &c.

ON Saturday the ſecond of September 1786, the PRISONER was put to the bar, and arraigned before Mr. Juſtice Gould and the Recorder of London. The indictment ſtated, that James George Semple, otherwiſe Harrold, otherwiſe Kennedy, did on the firſt day of September 1785, of Richard Lycett, coachmaker, one chaiſe, commonly called a poſt-chaiſe, of the value of fifty pounds, *feloniouſly ſteal, take, and carry away* againſt the peace, &c.

The *alias dictus* having been added, in this indictment, to the ſubſtantive name, and no other objection being made thereto, Mr. Lycett was called, who ſwore

That he was a coachmaker in Whitechapel, and let out carriages for hire; and that he knew the priſoner perfectly well. That on the firſt day of September, in the year 1785, the priſoner came to his houſe, and hired a poſt-chaiſe for three weeks or a month, for which he was to pay five ſhillings per day; that the priſoner had the carriage delivered to his order, which carriage Mr. Lycett never had the pleaſure of ſeeing again, nor

the

the priſoner, till Mr. Lycett ſaw him in confinement in the Poultry Compter.

Mr. Lycett further ſwore, that the priſoner came to him recommended from the Saracen's-Head, Aldgate, where he then lodged. That he had hired a carriage of him once before; which was on the 10th of July preceding, for ſix ſhillings a day, which he returned on the ſixteenth, and paid for.

That the carriage which the priſoner had the ſecond time, and for which he then ſtood indicted, was by the priſoner's direction altered, by having piſtol holſters put to it, and a net to the roof, with the platform reduced to the ſize of the Major's trunk.

He alſo ſwore, that the priſoner told him that the carriage was wanted for a tour to the north; that it was delivered on the ſame day to a ſervant of Mr. Bolton's, John Deacon, who keeps the Saracen's-Head Inn; that it was three weeks or a month for which it was hired, and that it was to be returned in that time.

That he had never heard from him afterwards; that he was ſure the priſoner at the bar was the ſame perſon, and had not the leaſt doubt of it. That there was no agreement to ſell the chaiſe, or to keep it longer than three or four weeks, and then pay fifty-two guineas for it; but that the priſoner ſaid, 'Suppoſe I ſhould have a mind to buy it, what

'would it be worth?' to which Mr. Lycett replied, 'About fifty-two guineas;' but that there was a ſale, either abſolutely or conditionally, Mr. Lycett poſitively denied.

He added alſo, that, unfortunately for him, this was not the chaiſe the priſoner had firſt ſpoke about; the chaiſe he obtained was almoſt a new one; the other, which the priſoner had before, and which he had then let to a gentleman for three or four days, was an old one.

The Recorder of London, who tried the priſoner, then put the following queſtions to Mr. Lycett.

Did you part with the chaiſe with any expectation of the priſoner's being a purchaſer? to which Mr. Lycett replied, By no means.

The evident meaning of the above queſtion was, to ſhew what was in the contemplation of the parties at the actual time of the priſoner's hiring the carriage; for if there had been any idea of a purchaſe, the felony would have been inſtantly reduced to a ſimple debt.

Mr. Lycett then underwent a very long and critical croſs examination from Mr. Garrow, who was *concerned* for the priſoner as his counſel.

Mr. Garrow ſeemed anxious to bring him to acknowledge that he meant to have made it only a debt. This, however, Mr. Lycett flatly denied. His evidence afforded much entertainment to the court from the conſiſtency of his ſtory, his unembarraſſed

embarraſſed attention to what he was about, and particularly by the ſmartneſs of his replies.

He was aſked who was concerned in the proſecution, and whether it did not originate at the inſtigation of Mr. Feltham, hatter, in Fleet-ſtreet.

Mr. Lycett acknowledged his obligations to Mr. Feltham for his advice; but added, that he believed his own pocket would be ſaddled with, and was able to defray, all the expences of the proſecution.

Well but, ſaid Mr. Garrow, how did the priſoner demean himſelf? Did he go about the buſineſs as you and I would have done?

O no, ſaid the witneſs, his addreſs is very different, I aſſure you. He is not ſo *rough*; he is a gentleman; his manners are perfectly *poliſhed*.

Mr. Lycett produced his book, at the requeſt of the counſel; when it appeared that the priſoner had obtained the firſt chaiſe under the name of Major Harrold.

It appeared alſo, that after the name Harrold, there had been an eraſure, on which eraſure ſtood the name of Semple; and being interrogated ſtrictly on this point, Mr. Lycett ſaid that he put down every name which he had heard the priſoner had went by; that there were three or four names at times put down, one of which had been the Marquis of Carmarthen; and that he put every name down till he had got the right one, which he diſcovered about three quarters of a year ago,

ago, at a Mr. Sadgrove's, a hair-dreſſer, at Knightſbridge, with whom the priſoner had lodged.

He was then aſked, if he had not called the priſoner a damned ſcoundrel, and ſaid that he would arreſt him for 50l. The former part of the queſtion Mr. Lycett readily acknowledged, but poſitively denied the latter.

Mr. Lycett, in his croſs examination, further ſaid, that he never gave the priſoner a bill of 50l. for the chaiſe, nor ever ſued out any writ againſt him: that his ſervant, John Marchant, delivered the chaiſe to Deacon: that the priſoner behaved in a fine flouriſhing and poliſhed manner; and that he ſhould have reſted very happy if the carriage had been ever returned. He denied ever receiving a bank-note of ten pounds in part of the carriage; and ſaid that his own pocket ſuffered for the proſecution; however, he thought it right to puniſh ſuch offenders.

Mr. Garrow then made an ingenious ſuppoſition, that where the eraſure ſtood in the book, there had been wrote "or to pay fifty guineas;" but this Mr. Lycett poſitively denied.

John Marchant, apprentice to Mr. Lycett, proved delivering the carriage to Deacon: and Deacon proved fetching it away from Mr. Lycett's. But although it appeared that Deacon had drove the priſoner once to Barnet and back, and took him up at Sadgrove's in Knightſbridge, and drove him to Uxbridge, from thence to the Duke of Portland's at Bulſtrode and back to town, yet this

this witneſs could not ſwear to the priſoner. On his firſt ſtanding up to give his evidence, he deſired to know who was to pay him for his trouble and loſs of time; for which he was ſeverely reprimanded by the court.

Mr. Bolton proved that the priſoner had been a cuſtomer of his in the name of Harrold; that he went with him to Lycett's when the carriage was hired; and that he knew nothing of any bargain but that of hiring.

Mr. Silveſter, who was for the proſecutor, being but juſt come into court, aſked Mr. Bolton, If the carriage was purchaſed or hired? To which Mr. Bolton replied, Hired.

The evidence being cloſed, Mr. Garrow addreſſed the court in a very long ſpeech, to ſhew cauſe why the priſoner ſhould not be put on his defence, as the fact ſtated to the court made it only a debt, and not a felony.

He cited many caſes, or rather ingeniouſly conſtrued many caſes, in a way contrary to their legal conſtructions; and blended the fact of hiring with the ſuppoſed conditional purchaſe, on which he argued a conſiderable while.

He begged leave to call the attention of the court to ſuch particular circumſtances in the caſe of his client, as he truſted would render all defence on his part unneceſſary. The tranſaction, in his opinion, had all the requiſites of a bargain between one man with another. Taking up the matter on this ground, he produced a variety of caſes to

eſtabliſh

eſtabliſh this propoſition, that as there appeared to him a bargain or agreement between the parties, Major Semple was chargeable only with having failed in fulfilling this part of the contract. The conſequence was, that he could have redreſs by a recovery of his property in a civil ſuit. This was the jet of his argument; and he contended that it would reſt with the Court to determine what the real nature of the fact or tranſaction between his client and Mr. Lycett was; and if they admitted with him the reality of a contract, he was ſatisfied in his own mind, that it was impoſſible that the caſe before the court could warrant a felonious charge.

The Recorder here ſtopped Mr. Garrow, and deſired him to confine his argument to the hiring, as the purchaſe was denied, and ſaid it was the province of the Jury to determine what the contract was. Judge Gould entirely coincided with the Recorder.

Mr. Garrow then argued ſimply on the hiring contract, and contended it was no felony.

Mr. Agar ſaid a few words on the ſame ſide as Mr. Garrow, and called the proſecution an extraordinary converſion of a mere Weſtminſter-Hall buſineſs to the bar of the Old Bailey.

He owned that he did not feel the force of the argument from the caſes which had been quoted. He thought them inapplicable, and preſumed the reaſoning they were intended to ſupport would be deemed inconcluſive. He admitted the contract

was

was not fully proved, and argued on the ſuppoſition that there was none, that it was only a hiring ſimply, and that it was a hire for a ſpecific time. But he deſired the court, and particularly the Jury, to beware of the conſequence of pronouncing his client guilty, becauſe he had not delivered to Mr. Lycett his property within a certain time. He denied that there was any law exiſting, by which one man could charge another felonioufly for not keeping his time to a day: and where could the line be drawn? No limitation of time whatever could conſtitute felony by the laws of England. He therefore thought his client's caſe would bear him out on theſe principles, even ſuppoſing he could produce no exculpatory evidence.

Mr. Silveſter was going to reply, when the Recorder ſtopped him, and ſaid he need not give himſelf any trouble on the ſubject, becauſe if the Jury believed the evidence, there was no queſtion of law. He was joined in opinion by Judge Gould, who thought the caſe fully within the late adjucations. The opinion of counſel being thus over-ruled, the priſoner was called upon for what he had to ſay in his own behalf, and addreſſed the court as follows:

THE PRISONER'S DEFENCE.

He informed the court, that while he lodged at the Saracen's-Head, he had occaſion to hire a carriage. There being none at the inn where he was,

to his mind, he was recommended to Mr. Lycett, from whom he hired one for ſeven days, as it was marked or entered in Mr. Lycett's book. Not long ſubſequent to this tranſaction, he bought a carriage from Mr. Licet at 50l. This he had upon trial. If it ſuited him he was to pay for it a twelvemonth afterwards; if not it was to be charged to him at 5s. per day. Mr. Lycett, however, alledging that altering the chaiſe for his accommodation had coſt him a good deal of extra charges; and agreeing to defray theſe, Mr. Lycett preſented him with a bill of about 6l. The priſoner then gave him a 10l. bank-note.

This was the ſubſtance of the priſoner's defence, which was not uttered in a manner that did much honour either to his education, his acknowledged abilities, or his appearance.

Mr. Lycett being aſked about the 10l. note, ſaid, The Major had flouriſhed his hand about in his pockets, and jingled ſome money, but he never ſaw either caſh or notes.

WITNESSES FOR THE PRISONER.

Mr. James Sadgrove was called, and ſwore that Mr. Lycett had told him he had let Major Harrold a poſt-chaiſe on trial, and that, if he liked it, he was to give him fifty-two guineas for it. Sadgrove acknowledged, on his croſs examination, that ſome gentlemen had been with him from the priſoner.

Mr.

Mr. Lycett moſt poſitively denied any ſuch converſation; but owned that, not being a lawyer, he could not tell whether or no, if he could have then found the Major, he ſhould not have arreſted him.

John Bowes, a hackney-coachman, was called to know, if ever he had heard any converſation between the priſoner and Mr. Lycett about the chaiſe. He had driven the priſoner ſeveral times to Mr. Lycett's, but never followed him into the houſe or ſhop, and therefore heard no converſation.

The Recorder, with that impartiality and fairneſs which has ever diſtinguiſhed his judicial character, and with a diſcrimination which reflects equal merit on his abilities, ſummed up the evidence, and ſtated every part of it for and againſt the proſecution, with great candour and exactneſs, in which he replied to the objections urged by the priſoner's counſel. He denied that there was any thing like a contract for a purchaſe proved. So that there was not the leaſt foundation for any reaſoning on that ſuppoſition. There was in his opinion, yet leſs weight, if poſſible, in the argument urged by Mr. Agar; for it ſtruck him as fairly and completely made out in the caſe that the hiring which had taken place was no more than a pretext made uſe of by the priſoner for getting poſſeſſion of Mr. Lycett's property, that he might convert it to his own purpoſes. The hiring a chaiſe before, and honourably paying the debt incurred by that means, carrying on theſe tranſactions under a

fictitious name, and never having to this moment produced the carriage, were circumſtances which ſhewed that the property had been obtained with a felonious intent. That the chaiſe was not hired with any view either to return it, or pay for it, and that the priſoner appeared to have no other object in what he did, than to realize whatever the chaiſe could fetch for his own uſe. The ſimple queſtion therefore on which the Jury were to decide, was the nature of the tranſaction between Mr. Lycett and the priſoner; and this opinion, he ſaid, met the concurrence of the firſt crown law authority, Judge Gould. If they thought he had really hired the chaiſe with a view to reſtore it, and pay for the time it was in his ſervice, though from neceſſity he had diſpoſed of it, however ſuch an action might be condemned or puniſhed as a breach of truſt, the law would not recognize it as felonious. But if, on the contrary, they thought from the evidence which had been produced, that the hiring was not *bona fide* on the priſoner's part, or, in ſhort, that they could not clear him of an intention to poſſeſs himſelf of this property, he could aſſure them there was no law againſt their bringing him in GUILTY.

The Jury, after conſulting among themſelves for the ſpace of ten minutes, gave in their verdict—*Guilty.*

The Recorder then aſked them, Whether they founded their verdict on the evidence given by Mr.

Mr. Lycett, or that of Sadgrove; in other words, ſaid he, Do you believe Mr. Lycett or Sadgrove? To which they replied, Mr. Lycett; when the Recorder obſerved, he was exactly of their opinion.

And thus ended the trial of a genius who has excited as much curioſity as his depredations have cauſed alarm; and for one of which the ſentence of the law condemns him to tranſportation for ſeven years.

A MOTION FOR DEFERRING JUDGMENT, IN THE CASE OF MAJOR SEMPLE, AT THE OLD BAILEY, ON THURSDAY, SEPT. 7.

MAJOR James George Semple being ordered to make his appearance at the bar, and the clerk having announced to him the nature of his crime, and the verdict of the Jury, demanded of him, whether he had any reaſons to adduce why the ſentence of death* ought not immediately to be pronounced.

Mr. Garrow then addreſſed himſelf to the bench. He acknowledged the integrity and ability of the judge, who had tried his client in very handſome and becoming terms. He truſted, what he had now to ſay would not be imputed to any other principle than his ſincere deſire of doing juſtice to his client. He ſtood in circumſtances peculiarly diſtreſſing and unfortunate. It was natural, thus ſituated, for him, like every one who had any value for the bleſſings of exiſtence, to deprecate, or if poſſible prevent, the augmentation of that preſſure of

* The offence being within the benefit of clergy, the priſoner in ſingle felonies is allowed to plead it.

Before culprits met with this indulgence, the above queſtion was put; and, even in clergyable offences it is ſtill aſked.

of miſery with which it was his deſtiny to grapple, by having recourſe to all poſſible expedients. This he conceived would apologize for the unhappy priſoner at the bar, and at the ſame time for the part which it was his own lot now to act in his favour. He was, indeed, ſolicitous to defeat any prejudice which might ariſe in the breaſt of the court againſt the motion which, with all humility, he was now to make.

It was, That judgment in the caſe of Major James George Semple, who had been adjudged by the verdict—Guilty of felony, ſhould be poſtponed until next ſeſſion.

He owned this motion did not originate with him; he was urged to ſuggeſt it in court by others, who thought the deciſion on the caſe of his client afforded ground for it.

The reaſons on which that opinion was founded were, that the facts proved were ſimple and deſtitute of thoſe circumſtances which conſtituted felony. He quoted ſeveral caſes in ſupport of that poſition. He denied that on the face of the caſe there was any thing to warrant the idea of a felonious intention. All that had been proved was the ſingle tranſaction of hiring a chaiſe. The priſoner was not proſecuted for not returning the goods, but that he took poſſeſſion of them with a felonious intent.

He would aſſert, with the greateſt poſſible deference for the opinion of the court, that ſuch a verdict was not authenticated by the evidence which had been produced. It was on this ſingle ground he preſumed at this time to trouble the court, and to beſeech his lordſhip in behalf of the unhappy priſoner, that judgment in his caſe ſhould be deferred until next ſeſſion.

Mr. Agar roſe to ſupport the motion, or rather requeſt, made by his learned brother. He was in hopes that his motives in this buſineſs would bear no other conſtruction than an honeſt ſolicitude to

urge every plea in favour of his unhappy client which the caſe would admit. Mr. Agar alſo had recourſe to ſeveral caſes, and endeavoured to ſhew that the preſent one was altogether new, and totally diſtinct from any thing which had occurred within the practice of modern times. It was a fact which all men converſant with the laws of the country knew, that fraud was a crime not only well defined and generally underſtood, but a ſpecial act of parliament had aſcertained its nature, and determined its puniſhment. This offence therefore was ſpecifically provided againſt. Why then inſtitute precedents, which, in his mind, had a tendency to confound thoſe things which were already ſo perfectly diſtinct; and indeed if the law, as adminiſtered in the caſe of the priſoner, was to be conſidered as eſtabliſhed, the crime of fraud was from that moment annihilated. There could be no ſuch thing. Hiring, when the goods poſſeſſed by that means were not inſtantly returned, would henceforth be deemed intentional felony.

Mr. Recorder ſaid, he was happy in having tried the priſoner in the preſence of one of the beſt Crown lawyers in the kingdom, who, fortunately, that day ſat the whole time upon the bench. In the opinions which he then ſtated, the learned judge had uniformly agreed with him. He did not well underſtand the ſhape which the buſineſs had now aſſumed. Merely poſtponing judgment could not, ſo far as his diſcernment went, in any degree whatever ſerve the priſoner. He was never more ſatisfied in his own mind with the law, as applied to any caſe, than in this. The felonious intention was the firſt circumſtance in the fact on which the priſoner had been tried, that muſt ſtrike every perſon of common ſenſe who took the matter into one moment's conſideration. The verdict of the jury, in like manner, moſt perfectly coincided with the idea of what

he

he conceived to be their duty, from the moſt impartial view of the evidence as it lay completely before them. But, however, it was very well known the manner of redreſs in the priſoner's contemplation could not be obtained here. The court was not competent to make any inquiry ſubſequent to the verdict of jury. It was the province of his Majeſty alone to afford ſuch relief as in his royal wiſdom he might think neceſſary for ſoftening the ſeverity of the law in the caſe of individuals.

Major Semple ſtated, that he only craved time of the court for the purpoſe of proſecuting ſuch as had perjured themſelves in their evidences againſt him.

His ſentence.

Mr. Recorder then addreſſed himſelf to the priſoner, whom he cautioned againſt imagining that the genteel accompliſhments which he poſſeſſed were any mitigation of the offence, for a verdict of a jury of his countrymen had pronounced him guilty. He ought to have known better, and therefore deſerved exemplary puniſhment. This was the opinion of the court. It was his duty now to pronounce the ſentence of the law upon him for the offence of which he had been found guilty; and that was, That he ſhould be tranſported for ſeven years beyond the ſeas to wherever his Majeſty, with the advice of his privy council, might judge it proper to ſend him.

THE END.

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